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THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CHILDHOOD

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BY

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AND THE DAY'S WORK"

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PREFACE

THIS book was written to restore the child to his proper place—the center of the educational picture. Not so long ago it was thought that the school existed for the child, but to-day children seem to have been born to furnish material for working out intelligence correlations, for charting learning graphs, and for arrangement in rows according to the mathematical curve of distribution of intelligence. At least one might so infer from the textbooks prepared for teachers. Children in the mass have their use, but to the statistically minded the individual child has a low market value.

A mighty interesting adventure for teachers would be to try to shatter the mathematical curve of distribution of ability, at least so far as their own pupils are concerned. The justification of the curve is that in the ordinary course of events a certain number of lazy, languid, unimaginative boys and girls may be expected. But why this expectation?

In seeking the answer to this question we discover peculiarities of personality. Some of these temperamental blemishes were started by physical disorders that may be remedied. Others are the result of unfortunate home conditions—of over-indulgence, too much mothering, or the severity of a well meaning but sternly exacting father.

The upper limit of intelligence most of us are quite willing to believe is fixed by heredity, but the vital question for teachers is, Will that limit be reached? Will it even be approximated?

The native intelligence of a child cannot be exceeded for exactly the same reason that the maximum power of an engine is unalterably fixed by its construction. But there are innumerable ways in which an engine's power may be reduced. May not the native ability of some boys and girls be found greater than was thought if the mental spark plugs are kept clean? Are we not letting forty horse-power minds deteriorate to twenty horse-power by failing to understand their delicate machinery?

Laziness, languor, and sluggishness do not have single causes. Many things are going on inside of boys and girls. Some of these things are not clear to the youngsters themselves. Often they fumble the ball because of this uncertainty.

Search for the causes of indifference to school work leads at once into the field of mental hygiene—the study of personality and the environmental factors that are influential in its growth.

A vast number of clinical studies of children have been made during the past two decades, and these investigations have enabled many teachers and some parents to clear away hazards that endanger a healthy mental and emotional development.

The whole child is the central thought of this book. It is not single habits—not even the habits of industry and obedience—that make the child. Single habits, no matter how important, are only a part of the story. A child may be obedient for reasons that later will prove emotionally disastrous. We want to know why he is obedient. It may be because he fears the consequences of disobedience. Then behavior patterns of timidity, of weakness, and of inefficiency are being formed.

A picture of the personality is what teachers should want to see to-day. Some children never grow up emotionally. Then maladjustment with its accompanying anxieties and indecisions follows. Here one discovers a vicious circle. Emotional conflicts, uncertainty, evasion of school tasks, or failure; then further conflicts concealed, perhaps, from even observant teachers, until behavior patterns of inadequacy to life's requirements are laid down.

Mental health has been dwelt upon at some length in the author's picture of the whole child. The significance of this subject has been heavily weighted in recent years by the large number of hazards that threaten normal development in a more complex civilization. Inhibitions, repressions, infantilism, inferiority, and the various complexes, are real dangers in the life of a developing child. But errors of judgment are easy and mistakes may be disastrous. Here, at least, wisdom must temper knowledge. Superficial information, uncritically accepted and followed, is perilous.

Shaping personality requires a master hand in human architecture. A static-minded teacher does not harmonize with a dynamic age. Never before have we had so much information about what is going on inside of boys and girls for teachers who are alive at the growing point. The author hopes that this book will contribute to this fund of knowledge.

E. J. S.

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THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CHILDHOOD

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CHAPTER I

LOOKING BACKWARD

THE last decade or two of the nineteenth century was a great time for those interested in the psychology of childhood. This was the period when G. Stanley Hall was making his investigations and inspiring his students to carry on researches of their own. Before this many studies had been made and books written, some of which have had tremendous influence. Pestalozzi had written his sentimental diary; Tiedemann his *Observations on the Development of the Minds of Children;* Perez had published his books on the early years of the child; and, most influential of all, Froebel had issued his *Education of Man.* But, as yet, the child study movement was unorganized.

Before Hall began his investigations, knowledge of the psychological development of children had been gained largely by observation, and the training was purely empirical. Information acquired by mothers was transmitted to their daughters for guidance in bringing up their children.

The child study movement in America may, perhaps, be said to have started with the publication of Hall's study of *The Contents of Children's Minds on Entering School.* This was followed rapidly by the translation of Perez's books on the early years of childhood and by Preyer's *Die Seele des Kindes.* Many other books and studies came in rapid succession: Miss Shinn's *Notes on the Development* *of a Child;* the baby records of Mrs. Moore and Mrs. Hall, and many more. The ball kept moving, gathering momentum as it rolled. Some of the important books of the earlier period were written by men who had had no experience either as teachers or parents. The educational writings of Herbert Spencer and of that wise old dissenter, Rousseau, still pay large dividends to mothers and teachers who take the trouble to read them.

The rather widespread notion that only those who have children of their own know anything about child training is erroneous. Teachers and parents are so close to the irritations of the home and school that their perspective is likely to be distorted. It is difficult to be psychological amid the interruptions and annoyances of children, even though the children are one's own. Consequently, the advice of spinster aunts, whose philosophy about rearing children is a perennial joke, often contains more wisdom than the experience of the harassed mother or teacher. Pestalozzi, who wrote educational classics, was not remarkable in school management, and one writer has given as the reason that he could not keep the children's boots quiet.

G. Stanley Hall felt that there was need of more accurate knowledge concerning children. He wanted to get the facts about their mental and physical development, what their early interests are and why they seem to lose these interests as they grow older. He had no faith in the widespread notion that for training the young, experience is all that parents and teachers need.

A mistaken belief in the value of experience has long prevailed and has crystallized into the maxim, "Experience is the best teacher." As a matter of fact, it may be the worst. The result depends upon whether one examines it critically and objectively.

Hall saw the light. He was confident that if we had information about growth and development we could apply that knowledge to the training and education of the young. Consequently, he set himself to the interesting task of getting some of the knowledge that was needed.

So enthusiastic was Hall that he created a school of child study. We are not thinking alone of the few who came under his personal instruction at Clark University. Not many were there during any single year, but in the aggregate they made a respectable number, and in enthusiasm they were a host.

The Hall school of child study, however, was not limited to Clark University. During the summer vacation the great teacher traveled over the country lecturing on the importance of studying children, and imparting the little store of knowledge which he and the few students on the Clark University campus had collected during the preceding academic year. The interest which he awakened was tremendous.

These lectures and the studies which appeared from time to time in the *Pedagogical Seminary* started others along similar lines of investigation. Barnes' *Studies in Education* and the *Transactions of the Illinois Society for Child Study* were published from time to time. Teachers in normal schools, in colleges, and in universities began to investigate problems of childhood. A veritable renaissance in child study started.

A complete list of the subjects studied, largely by the questionnaire method, would occupy too much space. Some idea of their extent and value may, however, be gained from the following list, all of which were inspired or personally directed by Hall himself.

Of *The Contents of Children's Minds on Entering School* we have already spoken. This study, inspired by Hall himself and suggested by an earlier investigation in Germany, revealed astonishingly false notions of boys and girls at the primary school age about many objects and facts with which youngsters were thought to be familiar. Incidentally, the investigation showed that children commonly misunderstand statements and descriptions because they are unacquainted with some of the words used. Pictures, also, were found to give notions that were far from accurate. The conclusions of this investigation were tremendously significant for those who read about it.

The vocabulary of children at different ages was also studied, and, in consequence, teachers and parents learned what words could be used with reasonable expectation of being understood. This study threw a bright light on the home and school method of teaching, and added much to the earlier study of *The Contents of Children's Minds on Entering School.*

The ideals and ambitions of boys and girls were also studied. Ambitions of children, however foolish they may seem to adults, are very serious matters for boys and girls. The thoughtful students of child psychology realized as they never had before that, so far at least as ideals are concerned, children should be treated as equals by teachers and parents. The point of view of the youngsters was seen to be the starting point for moral and ethical training.

The attitude of children toward punishment was also investigated, and the information gained may be called almost revolutionary. The opposition to punishment and the irritation that it produced were found to be caused not so much by the punishment itself as by its unfairness as the children saw it. A penalty which was deserved was accepted without resentment. Fairness, justice, a "square deal," were the criterion of judgment, but the children's estimate of fairness, it must be again emphasized, was the basis of their point of view. Here, once more, we see the importance of getting the beliefs and opinions of the child. His viewpoint may not be ours but to him it is the vital fact, and he resents a punishment that he feels is undeserved. But, on the other hand, if the penalty satisfies the children's standard of right and wrong they accept it as the just reaction to their "sins" of the great outside world and the "big people" who control them.

The interests of children at various ages were studied and the empirical observation was established that interest in particular activities begins, grows to a maximum if the conditions are suitable, and, under a stimulating environment, becomes a functioning part of the life of the growing child. The time when each interest reveals itself was called the nascent period for that interest. The emergence of the nascent periods for scientific interest and for reading was studied and the method by which these interests may be nurtured was described in considerable detail. Since the nascent period for these and other activities varies somewhat with different children, and since the emergence of enthusiasms depends in large measure upon the stimulation of the environment, it was suggested that tempting incentives be placed in the way of children. Enticing books, trips to woods and stream, literature suited to their age, and opportunity to perform simple scientific experiments were suggested in order that the nascent period of no interest may come and go without being caught at the moment of its flood.

Self-governing clubs were formed and studied by young men. From these observations emerged the notion of pupil government in the schools. Boys of twelve or thereabouts were found amazingly capable of self-control or, perhaps, it would be more correct to say of organizing for the control of one another. As an illustration, one New York City school with over two thousand pupils, some two hundred of whom had been sent to this school by the juvenile courts, was under pupil government. "We have had pupil control for over nine years," the principal told the present writer, "and we could not get along without it."

Unfortunately, ideas are forgotten as teachers who developed them pass away, and the educational value of pupil government has given way to the older and less intelligent teacher control.[1]

The way in which children reason was also studied during those early days when G. Stanley Hall was making empirical pedagogy into a science and when, with his students, he was showing parents that child training requires knowledge of the ways in which immature minds develop.

The peculiar and obstinate children were likewise investigated and ways of making them more "reasonable" suggested. Hall was not so much interested in physically defective children as in those whose aberrancy was psychological. Educational and social arrest caused by bad methods in school and home entranced him and, consequently, he wanted to know the childish reasons that produce resistance to teacher and parent. A study of men of genius revealed the astonishing fact that a large number of them were considered stupid by their teachers. This could only mean that these bright boys were misunderstood. These investigations made it increasingly evident that the school method is adapted to the slow and dull rather than to the quick and bright.

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[1] Those who are interested in a descriptive discussion of the psychology and pedagogy of pupil government may be interested in Chapter ii of the writer's *The Psychology of Youth* (Scribner).

Physical defects were studied but not to the extent made possible by more recently acquired knowledge. The vision of school children was investigated in many schools and the effect of adenoids upon physical and mental development was observed. These studies showed the effect of remediable physical defects upon the development of habits of study, enthusiasms, and personality of children.

If the mental effect of reflex neuroses was at times exaggerated by enthusiasts, the general result was helpful. Exaggeration is not always bad; sometimes it is the only way to awaken interest. At any rate, so far as the reflex effects of eyestrain and adenoids are concerned, the result was beneficial. Besides, we are not sure at the present time that there was exaggeration, so far at least as certain, not uncommon, cases are concerned.

Incorrigibility was found to be encouraged if not caused by these defects, and lack of interest in the class work was shown to be produced, among other ways, by inability to see or hear clearly. Again, the bodily discomfort resulting from remediable defects, such as adenoids, and headaches caused by eyestrain, cannot fail to suppress the mental activity which study and attention require. Much of this is common knowledge to-day, but for the first proof of it we are indebted to the interest in child study which Hall aroused.

The results of all these investigations and many more were finally brought together in Hall's epoch-making books, *Adolescence*, and *Educational Problems*.

The more recent studies have been of quite a different sort from those which Hall initiated. He used the questionnaire which has been much criticized. But, if a method may be judged by its results, the questionnaire has been immensely valuable. Probably, however, its time has passed, but it is unfortunate that its teachings have been so largely forgotten. The newer, more scientific methods tell us much about the physical and mental development of children but offer little help on the very practical question, how to treat children in the home and school that they may want to do the things which they ought to do. Interest in literature and science; the creation of ambitions; and the control of boys and girls remain very pressing questions which were dealt with more completely by the studies of Hall and his students than by more recent child study.

To be sure, we have learned much that is valuable from the behaviorists about the conditioning of emotions and actions. We have found that most of the fears of children are not "natural" as was formerly thought. They are conditioned by the home environment. Though behaviorists have not worked out a plan of campaign, it is clear that desirable actions and interest in reading may also be conditioned and, consequently, we have here an important and fruitful method of child training when some one appears with Hall's enthusiasm for practical applications and with his genius for making the scientific facts clear to the ordinary mother and teacher.

The psychoanalysts, again, have emphasized and named the inferiority and other complexes. The misfortune here, however, is that those who have tried to apply the doctrine to the training of children have not yet been able to rid themselves of the mystical influence of words. Many parents and teachers talk very glibly and wisely with words as meaningless to them as "cosmic harmony."

The habit and psychiatric clinics are getting close to the practical needs of child life but children do not reach these clinics until their behavior approaches the pathological, and the mothers, who often need them most, never get there.

A large amount of work, with immensely valuable results, is being done on the physical and mental growth of children. Gesell has given us a psychological outline of normal development from birth to the sixth year and Helen Woolley has published a significant study of children between the ages of fourteen and eighteen. The preschool child, in general, has been discussed by Gesell, Baldwin and Stecher.

The racial and individual tendencies of children, however, have fallen into disrepute since the passing of the Hall school of child study. The behaviorists say that there are few if any inherited tendencies. Admitting, for the sake of brevity, that the behaviorists are right, the fact nevertheless remains that children have what may be called *preferred tendencies. They are more easily conditioned for some actions than for others.* The very practical question, therefore, remains: How may we develop these preferred actions into social behavior or, to use a Freudian phrase, how may we sublimate them?

The average mother is not greatly helped by saying that her children should not have these tendencies. Perhaps, in time, the more thoughtful parents and teachers will prevent the conditioning of many tendencies but many mothers will still want to know how to change those which have developed from whatever cause. That the fault is in the training may make mother and teacher sad, but sadness does not reveal the remedy, and to this practical question neither behaviorists nor psychoanalysts give a satisfying answer. The method for unscrambling fear has been shown by behaviorists but there the remediable story, so far as they are concerned, ends.

Child welfare institutes, or research stations, have been organized in a number of universities and they are beginning to make the art of child training into a science. Some of the questions that Hall investigated by questionnaires are being subjected to a more strictly scientific examination, but the results of some of the studies of the research stations are distressingly commonplace and self-evident. "The most significant differences in sentence development with age," one of these investigators solemnly informs us, "are an increasing length of sentence, a greater frequency of complete sentences, and a decrease in the amount of repetition of identical phrases." This information hardly required ninety pages of tests and graphs. It was known before Hall found it by his "unscientific" questionnaires.

Valuable service to child study is being given at the present time by those interested in the causes and development of nervous disturbances during the early years of childhood. We now know, as never before, that the foundation for some of the neurasthenias and psychoses is laid in childhood. The practical application of the knowledge gained by the study of these mental disorders has rapidly followed the acquisition of knowledge regarding their cause. Many pamphlets and books have been published which are helpful to parents and teachers who take the trouble to read them. The various clinics have assisted greatly in these vexing problems. Since parents themselves, often because of an unintelligent solicitude and affection, are usually the cause of mental disturbances in their children, it is difficult to find a firm fulcrum for the teacher's lever of reform. In these mental problems child study often becomes parent study, and neither fathers nor mothers enjoy having the responsibility and blame shifted from their children to themselves.

Distinct progress, however, is being made. The more intelligent parents are seeing the light and, by degrees, it is spreading through the various social groups. As time passes we may expect the scientific knowledge which the child welfare research stations and clinics are accumulating to be made both available and usable in the home. Men and women with a "popularizing" turn of mind are making themselves familiar with the scientific facts and are putting the knowledge into language which unscientific fathers and mothers can understand and use.

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CHAPTER II

THE PRESCHOOL CHILD

I. INFANCY

IF we ask, What kind of consciousness has a very youthful infant? What is happening in its mind? or, How does it view the objects flitting around in its service? the answers are purely conjectural. We can only guess from the behavior of the baby what is going on inside of its cranium.

According to Koffka,[1] "The first phenomena are qualities upon a background. . . . The most primitive phenomena are figural." As examples, he cites a luminous point on a different, uniform background, or "something cold at a place upon the skin set off from the usual temperature of the rest of the skin." Koffka's view assumes too much meaning in the infant's early experiences. Probably James was more correct when he said that a "baby, assailed by eyes, ears, nose, skin, and entrails all at once, feels it as one great, blooming, buzzing confusion."

Information about the behavior of infants from month to month—their growing capacity to meet the conditions to which they are subjected—rests upon a firmer basis. The earlier work was largely observational though some experimental tests were always included. The present method is to measure progress by standardized tests. This way of doing it is much more accurate, and it also puts more meaning into the development of babies for the parents who watch their growth.

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[1] Kurt Koffka, *The Growth of the Mind* (Harcourt, Brace), pp. 131*f*.

The sense organs are ready at birth to respond to their appropriate stimuli, but not immediately with the accuracy which they acquire a little later. We know that infants must learn to use their eyes and ears. We have discovered that they learn to see distance, namely, that one object is farther from them than another, and that they learn by degrees to locate sound. In order that their sense organs may be properly developed, the right sort of environment is needed. Tempting opportunities should be presented. The sense organs, like any other organ, require stimulation if they are to develop, and if, through use of them, the brain is to attain its normal growth.

The important fact is that the sensorimotor pathway is open and ready to learn to function. The phrase "to learn to function" is used deliberately, because a varying amount of practice seems necessary. The eyes, for example, do not focus immediately, and the direction of sound, never very exact, is probably perceived only vaguely.

Conclusions during this early period are inferential and subject to many errors. Catching a baby a few days old staring at its mother hardly justifies the statement that the infant "sees" her. The eyes must stare somewhere, and variations in light and shadow may be the directive influence. The evidence seems pretty conclusive, however, that sometime during the first week, perhaps after a day or two, objects and sounds cause appropriate reactions.[2] What, or how clearly, the newborn infant sees is another question.

Certain reflexes, of course, must be ready to function successfully at birth. They are the ones that must act immediately to preserve the life of the infant. Examples of these are sucking and swallowing. In addition to the "life preservers," quite a number of others are sufficiently developed to produce a more or less purposive response. Some of these, as squirming, moving limbs, fingers, and toes, are probably the result of undefined organic and neural action rather than of specific stimuli. At the beginning, reactions seem to be purposeless, unless we regard change to remove discomfort as a purpose. But even then the movement is more likely due to organic overflow of energy than to specific discomfort. A change in the environment—light on a shadowy background, a sound, or being moved—causes movement or some sense-response; but change in the environment is the characteristic of a stimulus.

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[2] *Bulletin of the Lying-in Hospital* (New York, 1910). Investigation by Drs. Peterson and Rainey.

During the first day, an infant tested by Gesell "cried at every pronounced new stimulus," but within two weeks these reactions appear to be a little more purposive, if this word can be used for an unconscious effort to alter the immediate environment, as, for instance, crying when in the crib and ceasing to cry when taken up, as Gesell found to be the case.

The explanation seems to be that there is an organic urge for stimulation rather than for lying quiet, and that the particular form of response, both to change and to its absence, quickly becomes a "conditioned reaction." This is indicated by the fact that an infant at first cries when left in the crib, but before long ceases to make this response when crying produces no results. We call this change an acquired adaptation, but all acquired adaptations are conditioned responses.

Since conditioned reactions are the beginning, and one might almost say the end, of child training, it is important that they be understood. Consequently, a brief statement of their nature may well be given at the outset. The reader will then be able to see their application to the various phases and periods of growth. Parents and teachers are urged frequently to ask themselves, What conditioned, or *caused,* this particular response or behavior, and how shall I uncondition it and produce a more desirable type of behavior?

The term "conditioned reflex" was first used, so far as the present writer knows, by the Russian physiologist Pavlov. He found that if a wholly neutral stimulus, such as the ringing of a bell or the ticking of a metronome, occurs when a dog is being fed, the reflex physiological reactions naturally produced by the sight and smell of food will soon follow the ringing of the bell and ticking of the metronome, though no food be offered. In this case the physiological reaction is the flow of saliva and gastric juice. "I have termed this new group of reflexes *conditioned reflexes,*" says Pavlov,[3] *"to distinguish them from the inborn or unconditioned reflexes."*

Clearly, then, all of our habits, emotional reactions, and the various responses which we have acquired by training and education in its widest sense are conditioned. In other words, our behavior in given situations has been first produced and then fixed in exactly the same way as Pavlov's dogs learned to react to the ringing of the bell and the ticking of the metronome.

Some of these forms of behavior are good and others are bad. The fear reactions, of which we shall speak in another chapter, and the irritable responses that deplete the nervous system, are examples of bad responses. They are not warranted by the stimuli. They arise in association with conditions favorable to the reaction, and then become established as habitual modes of response. They are not inborn. They are acquired. Bears, for example, are taught to dance to music by putting them on hot irons while the music is playing. In a short time, they dance to the music without the pain of the heated metal. Dancing has thus become conditioned to the sound of music.

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[3] I. P. Pavlov, *Conditioned Reflexes* (Oxford University Press), p. 25.

The native urge for change, operative during infancy, childhood, and early adolescence, caused the infant referred to above to cry to be taken from the crib; but when a response—behavior—accomplishes nothing, the baby, whether an infant or adult, adapts himself quite comfortably to the situation that exists. The conditioning process is always going on.

Turning now to simple movements out of which habits are formed by the conditioning influence of utility, grasping is an original reflex, but the infant at first is unable to oppose thumb and fingers. This human utilization of the thumb is learned, according to Watson, somewhere around the fourth month of life. Gesell puts it considerably later. The use of the thumb, so serviceable to man, is one of the interesting acquired human adaptations.

The human differentiation between the fore and hind limbs has prevented the thumb of the foot from acquiring the facile movements of the hand; but the occasional instances of men who have lost their arms learning to write and paint with foot and toes emphasize the effect of use and disuse in the developmental process. These cases also illustrate in the field of habit the conditioning of responses.

The strange uses to which these men have put their feet and toes show what marvelous adaptations may be made where need compels. Putting it in psychological language, we say that new and unusual neural "patterns" have been made to function, or act, with remarkable delicacy. Since this has great significance for the training of infants and children, it will be well to delay for a moment to see what these patterns are.

In the brain there are myriads of anatomical connections which must be trained to function if they are to be anything more than anatomical possibilities of action—movement or behavior. Naturally, no one with arms and fingers wishes to learn to write with his toes; but when one learns that all behavior has the same explanation—the formation of patterns of action—these feats become big with importance.

Much of the behavior of infants might make one think that they are acting according to certain fixed patterns—inherited neural molds that determine behavior. This, however, is not true. Besides those needed for the preservation of life at birth, there are few "predetermined" responses. The vast majority are "conditioned," that is, acquired. Thus the neural patterns of behavior become fixed. This means that under similar conditions the same action will follow. For practical purposes, patterns of movements or behavior may be regarded as habits of action. But neural patterns underlie habits.

Most of the reactions—behavior patterns—which in the past have been called instincts, are perfected by stimulation from the environment. It seems clear, however, that infants and young children acquire certain types of responses or behavior more readily than other kinds. The racial or, to use a more familiar word, instinctive basis for this selective preference in the responses, is at present a matter of dispute. It is beyond question, however, that behavior is far more a matter of the environment than was formerly thought. This, of course, adds greatly to the responsibility of parents and teachers.

So far as original emotional reactions are concerned, Watson found but three—anger, love, and fear. Even these emotions seem to have a much narrower range than was formerly supposed. Fear, according to Watson's experiments, is aroused when an infant, left unsupported, drops, or when a sudden, loud sound is made. Watson also observed that fear is manifested when an infant in a light sleep is startled by being suddenly pushed, pulled, or shaken.

The formation of emotional attitudes, beginning in earliest infancy, continues throughout the entire preschool period, and by early adolescence these attitudes of adjustment or maladjustment are pretty firmly fixed. They may, perhaps, be changed later when they become so obnoxious that even the individual himself sees threatening disaster ahead, but "it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle."

Marston, experimenting with one hundred children between two and six years of age, found that "children long before the normal age of school entrance, even as young as two and three years, have already developed characteristic attitudes of introversion and extroversion towards certain significant situations."[4] The conviction is growing that the personality of adults is made during the preschool period. Intelligent teachers can do something to improve the bad start of many youngsters, but they could do much more if parents were not so frequently afflicted with mental blindness regarding the product of their own untrained experience.

Let us be sure to keep our bearings. A mass of information is likely to be confusing. Consequently a rapid survey of a very young baby's life is worth while before we continue the biographical sketch.

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[4] University of Iowa Studies in Child Welfare, Vol. III.

At birth, an infant is a very limited sensorimotor mechanism. The pathways for the motor responses necessary to preserve life are prepared to do their work. This assumes, also, a certain sensory preparedness. A few motor and emotional reflex patterns are ready to function, as well as those for random movements. The first actions are started by internal changes. Restless movements and crying are examples. These actions may be stopped, or "inhibited," momentarily at least, by sudden sensory stimulation, such as clapping the hands. These inhibitory responses indicate a condition akin to attention. The infant is not only fitted to receive stimuli; he is also prepared to be influenced by them. Reaction, as well as action, has begun. Reaction, behavior! the making of a personality! The baby is ready for its training.

Behavior patterns are being formed from the beginning. Random movements are organized into complex, systematized responses which are the beginning of what, for want of a better name, is called voluntary action. Inner needs, chiefly discomfort and urges, are asserting themselves and tending, in a vague, undefined way, to alter the immediate environment. Mere change satisfies momentarily, but quickly further change is demanded. Movement may be said to characterize the waking life of an infant. In this way he starts neural pathways to functioning and exercises his muscles. Unconsciously he is using the trial and error method of attaining ends only vaguely felt. Reactions, and those organized responses which we call behavior, are being conditioned from the beginning. Reconstruction of the little environmental world is the vague aim of the urge, and adaptation, ending in fixed responses—habits—follows.

A baby begins to learn as soon as it is born. This learning takes the form of adaptation, and these adaptations quickly become fixed as habits. This, let us repeat, is the beginning and perhaps the end of the psychology of babyhood. Adaptation and conditioned behavior! Then fixed habits, nervous and emotional, followed, perhaps, by inability to make adequate adjustments to the situations of life. The emphasis is intentional because the evidence is quite conclusive that many so-called constitutional tendencies may be overcome by thoughtful control of the conditioning environment. At any rate, blaming heredity is giving up the job.

Moving forward now, in our sketch of the development of infants, we come to the age at which they learn to walk. Usually this big event is about the thirteenth or fourteenth month, though the variation at times is rather great.

Among the factors and "inducements" which influence more or less the essential coördinations of walking, are intelligence, body weight, health, and "temptations," such as walking playmates and adult encouragement. Imitation of associates is a natural influence, but adult encouragement should not be insistent until the child begins the effort of its own accord. The reason for this caution is that commonly the child will try to stand upright and toddle when the bones of its legs are strong enough to bear its weight.

Occasionally curious exceptions occur. The writer knows of one intelligent child who had not walked at eighteen months. As the days passed, the parents were seriously disturbed. Then, one day when the father sat a short distance away, holding a bright red ribbon in his hand, the child pulled himself up with the aid of a chair and walked, wobbling more or less, to his father and took the ribbon.

Another case illustrates a peculiar instance of conditioning. Again the usual age for walking had passed. Then one day the child picked up his father's detached cuff, slipped it on his wrist, and walked ten feet or more to his father. Considerable training was needed to uncondition this act. For some days the cuff was essential to the walking coördinations. Without it the child could not walk, but with it he could and did.

We have been running through a few of the acquisitions of infants during the first two years; but when we come to recollection and recognition of past events there is much uncertainty. The reason is the difficulty of distinguishing between actual memories and the events of which we have been told. Recollection with recognition rarely goes back farther than three years of age, or thereabouts, yet occasionally there seem to be remarkable exceptions to this rule.

Sir William Crookes, in later years, "often told his astonished hearers that he clearly remembered learning to walk! He said that one scene was indelibly impressed on his memory, and that it probably constituted his earliest recollection. 'Two gigantic figures,' he said, 'appeared a long way off and held out their arms to him.' As they were both women, we may suppose they were his mother and his Aunt Martha. He tried to approach the giantesses across the immense intervening distance, and had almost succeeded in reaching them when they gave a shout and he promptly fell to the ground."[5] If Crookes's memory was not at fault, this recollection is very remarkable, as his age at the time cannot have been much more than a year.

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[5] E. E. Fournier D'Albe, *Life of Sir William Crookes* (Appleton), p. 12.

Undoubtedly we remember many things that we learned during infancy, but the events do not stand out conspicuously. They had no special significance. Many were merely part of the routine of the "day's work." Normally, for example, children learn to talk somewhere between the twelfth and fifteenth months, and, of course, they remember what they learned. But probably no one remembers when he began to use short sentences.

Emotional responses and habits of behavior are also acquired from earliest infancy, yet no one recalls the beginning. Indeed, the present tendency is to place the formation of personality in the "forgotten memories" of infancy.

This emphasizes once more the tremendous importance of early training and conditioning of habits of behavior. Emotional adjustment or maladjustment is formed, but we do not remember when or how. Neurotic tendencies are often encouraged, and the foundation is laid for later emotional instability. Fears are created by the conditioning process, and later the fear remains though its cause cannot be recalled except as it is sometimes brought to mind by the analytical method of free association or by one or another of the several devices for recovering "lost memories."

Briefly summarizing the events of the first two years of an infant's life with special reference to their effect upon the emerging personality, we know to-day that from the viewpoint of mental hygiene these early years to which "the memory of man goeth not" are of immense significance. Habits of behavior are being established; likes and dislikes for certain foods are created; emotional attitudes are being fixed; dreads, revulsions, impulsive attractions, aversions, and personality quirks which later mark the man or woman as temperamentally unbearable, and are thought to be inherited, are started during these early years by the conditioning influence of the conscious or unconscious training, or lack of training. It is well to act on the assumption that few traits are native or constitutional. Most of them are "made to order" during infancy, though the makers, who are the parents, may be quite unaware of the troubles and mental disturbances for which they are preparing their children.

We have said that the newborn infant begins at once to adapt itself to conditions. This has immense psychological importance because adaptation reaches far out into the field of development and training. A baby very quickly learns whether it can attain a desired end by crying. If it finds that it can, this method is used until the mother, fearful of the consequences of a spasm, dares not resist. But the baby also learns just as quickly that crying produces no results. This means of gratifying a wish then ceases to be used. Not even a newborn babe wants to go to unnecessary trouble.

We are emphasizing adaptation because of its tremendous importance from birth through adolescence. One set of conditions is quite as satisfactory to children as another so far as adaptation is concerned. Habitual behavior is comfortable. Change of habits causes discomfort.

The fundamental question then is, What are the conditions to which the child will adapt itself? What behavior will be conditioned?

This fitting into conditions—adaptation to existing situations—continues throughout childhood. If parents would realize this, they would save themselves much ineffectual effort during adolescence and, in many cases, they would be spared days and nights of anguish. The attempt later to overcome the habits which were formed quietly and unobtrusively in earlier years is all but vain. The child learns early in its young life that it can get what it wants if it makes enough trouble, and this knowledge is not easily eradicated.

Unconscious learning characterizes infancy; but the fact that it is unconscious does not lessen the influence of the habits which the infant acquires. It is in this unconscious way that adjustments are made. Character and personality are being formed, and later effort, however strenuous, accomplishes little.

Adaptation, as we have said, begins with the birth of the child, and it continues until the adolescent leaves the home to go out into the world. Incidentally, it may be added that the success of the young man and woman will largely depend upon the training in adaptation which they have received. The difference between the early and later adaptations consists in the growing capacity to understand them.

In early adolescence, when boys vigorously refuse to yield to the requirements of the home and girls whine in their insistent efforts to attain their wishes, parents suddenly become aware that something has been wrong in the training which they have given. Perhaps, when this awakening comes, they suddenly put the pressure on in their efforts to remedy their previous failure; but, if it is not too late, obedience is secured only at the expense of tremendous nervous strain for parents and children alike.

We have said that childhood is the time when the nervous functions are being established. Whether they will do their work without unnecessary friction depends to a large extent upon the methods that are followed during the early period of infancy when children are so young that parents are likely to think that nothing is too good for them.

Of course, babies are made to be loved; but there is too much sentimentality and too little science in their rearing. Happiness, to a large extent, depends upon the things to which one is accustomed. An infant will be just as happy under a scientific regimen as under sentimental treatment, and later it will be much more joyous. Irritation is always a strain, and the nervous system of the infant is still in the formative stage. It has not yet become stabilized. Things which later have no serious effect may be disastrous during this early period. The personality is being formed.

II. THE NURSERY SCHOOL AGE

Nursery schools are places where, among other advantages, home indulgence may be neutralized. For obvious reasons this is not one of their advertised purposes. But if a child of the mature age of two years has put together two events, namely, that staging a spasm on the floor brings his mother to terms, the trained attendants of the nursery school know what to do with him. They leave him alone with his spasm. Since a tantrum that produces nothing and has no spectators is a bore, the child gives it up.

Nursery schools had their beginning in the conviction that many mothers have neither the time nor the knowledge needed for the proper care of their infants. Oberlin founded his school at Walbach, France, in 1774, to save children from the economic and moral effects of war, and Owen, much later, in Scotland, had especially in mind the children of factory laborers. Quite recently, in America, these schools have acquired a well-deserved reputation with mothers who, like factory workers, though for quite a different reason, do not have time for such a young and troublesome thing as a baby. Perhaps this is fortunate, since mothers who do not want to be "bothered" should not have the care of their infants. As a matter of fact, the babies of these mothers are usually turned over to nurse girls who have neither the knowledge nor interest needed for their care and training.

The function and appreciation of nursery schools have broadened lately. The importance of knowledge about mental and physical development during the early years of life has been more generally recognized. Many mothers who are not wage-earners are occupied with household duties and can give only intermittent attention to the infant. The result is likely to be frequent irritated interference with what the baby is doing. Other mothers, again, are too much interested in their social engagements to be bothered with so small an edition of humanity. Consequently, they employ nurses who, besides lack of knowledge, have no interest in the infant beyond the weekly wage which they receive. Bad habits are thus started, some of which are sexual. At best the developing nervous system is subject to constant irritation. In this connection, Harriet M. Johnson, director of a nursery school in lower Manhattan, says: "We include no maids on our staff except one for the cleaning and laundry work. . . . We as teachers assume the entire care of the children."

Nursery schools furnish an environment needed by a growing mind. The teachers observe the habit tendencies of each child and uncondition those that are not desirable before they get too firm a grip.

The method is the same as with the younger infant. The conditioning and adaptive process goes on. But there is an important difference. The addition of even a few months complicates the situation. The one-year-old or less moves about within a comparatively restricted area. If the right habits have been conditioned, he enjoys playing for a longer period with the things around him. He has learned to entertain himself when suitable playthings are supplied.

But at eighteen months and earlier his life has broadened. He can now go and get what he wants and get into trouble by doing it. His senses are more alert and comprehensive. His demands are multiplied and his adaptive possibilities greatly increased.

This means new dangers as well as new opportunities in habit formation. The conditioned behavior of the earlier period no longer fully meets the requirements. The outlook is so much wider and the demands so much more insistent that a thoughtful mother often wonders whether her efforts have been futile. But the change indicates enlarged mental growth which the environment should take into account. The educational adventure progresses.

Personality, which began to take form at birth, assumes increased importance. Mental complexes, without reference to Freudian psychology, are likely to become fixed, and fears may be created. Selfishness, stubbornness, and willfulness are also prone to assert themselves regardless of previous training. Sometimes it appears as though the conditioning process must be begun all over again. But, as a matter of fact, it should merely be continued as new needs arise with growth.

For all of these conditions the nursery schools plan; and they do it more wisely and effectively than mothers, with their other duties, or nursemaids, with their lack of knowledge and interest, can do. The changes which these schools have produced in the personality of problem children and in factors which make for an adaptive life, prove their value.

David, a boy reported by Helen T. Woolley,[6] had spent his first two and a half years in an infant asylum. When admitted to the nursery school he was regarded as an inferior child with serious behavior tendencies. "His chief interest in other children seemed to consist in a desire to hit them, destroy their projects, or to get a laugh from them by silliness. . . . At two-and-a-half he was no better developed mentally than the average child of between a year and a year-and-a-half. . . . At five we think he is a normal child—a bit slow intellectually, but without serious behavior problems." If this can be accomplished with "a seriously retarded child with behavior problems," these nursery schools must be pretty good places for "normal" children with only the "behavior problems" that come with early childhood.

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[6] Helen T. Woolley, "David," Child Welfare League of America, Case Studies, No. 2.

The behavior problems of David—hitting other children, destroying their projects, and acting silly—are not unknown among two-year-old children in the "best families." There the usual treatment is a sharp command to "stop that," or, perhaps, physical punishment. Both of these methods are unpsychological because each maims the personality. Neither one develops the child. So far as either has any effect, the restraining influence is fear; and fear is a mental deformity.

The behavior of many mothers would seem to indicate that they think their chief function is to thwart or forbid, and to enforce their prohibitions with punishment which is thought suitable to the tender years of the child. This is the easiest way to discipline. It is also the worst.

The idea is somewhat general that infants must not disturb grown-up people. Perhaps this mistaken notion is often justification for nursery schools. If the mother does not wish to give her time to her baby, if she prefers to spend her afternoons at clubs telling others how to manage their infants, or if she does not want to be disturbed while she reads about "Mrs. Waddell's Love Nest," the nursery school is the best place for her child.

If the efforts of infants to "educate" themselves cause them to continue to break their toys from the sheer joy of getting exercise, they should be given toys that will not break. When, again, these attempts at self-training lead to bad habits, or, perhaps, to danger, the infant should be guided into other activities which satisfy the urge for sensory stimulation. Repression, or punishment, reveals the lack of psychological insight and nervousness of the mother. The infant is doing the best it can to develop itself in the absence of intelligent guidance.

But a baby, again, may receive too much attention. It should learn to entertain itself. Much watching but little interfering is the motto for this stage of growth. Yet observation without knowledge is sterile.

Psychological insight, however, with knowledge as its foundation, has hardly yet been thought to be a necessary requirement. Yet, if mental growth has any significance, if it can be in any way directed, if infancy is not completely isolated from succeeding years, and unless development is a meaningless word, the psychological information acquired in recent years is absolutely essential for those who would assist infants in getting the right start in life. Though we may not be able to follow the advice of Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes and begin the training of a child three hundred years before it is born, we can at least make a start in the nursery.

One trouble with child training, as with most other matters, is the demand for "rules" of action which can be applied in all cases. Yet every mother of several children must have discovered that the same method has not produced equivalent results with two sisters or brothers. Each child is a special problem and should be studied as a particular case.

To be sure, a few general rules may be given. Preparation of the nursery stage for the conditioning or adaptive process should be the mother's first care. Then adaptation of the infant to its part in the "play" may be helped by looks of approval or disapproval, and, when necessary, by the gentle punishments that remind the baby of its rôle. But we must remember that such young actors have certain privileges that go with babyhood.

Making a noise, for example, is one of their inalienable rights, and if the mother is disturbed by the noise, she, rather than the baby, is the one who needs psychiatric attention. Infants have certain natural inclinations or tendencies which should be respected. We call these inclinations "natural" because they develop the child's muscles, or in some other way help him to grow and mature.

For many mothers the baby is little more than an exhibit on social occasions. At these moments one might think the child was the chief concern of the parent, but further observation shows that this interest is only a pose. In the privacy of the home things are quite different.

One wonders at times what the state of mind of an infant must be when it finds itself most effusively and unhygienically kissed at one moment by the mother or strangers, and shortly after spanked because of unconscious attempts to exercise its arms or legs or lungs. A strangely inconsistent and unreliable world this must be to a baby, even though it knows nothing of the principles of hygiene or the laws of physiology. It is no wonder that James called this very youthful state of mind a "blooming confusion."

Not uncommonly a young mother receives so much advice that her mind is in the same confused condition as that of her infant. Every older mother thinks that she knows just how children should be trained. "I ought to know something about children," exclaimed one, "I've already buried ten." Unfortunately, we have no record of those who have been buried mentally but who still walk about the streets or inhabit our sanitaria.

The shibboleth that "experience is the best teacher" is one of our most disastrous maxims. It takes no account of knowledge and leaves intelligent criticism of experience entirely out of its reckoning. So far as our present theme is concerned, the diversity of conclusions resulting from experience should be sufficient condemnation of the maxim. "Experience" killed many babies before pediatrists gained their present knowledge. To-day, the wise mother summons the children's physician instead of relying upon the "experience" of the old ladies of her acquaintance. The more intelligent parents are also trying to learn something about the psychology of children and its practical application to child training. The chief difficulty of these parents is in selecting the books which they shall read.

Demand is always quickly supplied and the supply is variable in its quality. Quacks hurry to assist those who are ready to pay for help, and the "unconscious mind" of children has become a profitable field to "work."

III. FROM THE NURSERY TO THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

From three to six, or thereabouts, is predominantly the questioning age; and questions continue to be asked until the child's eagerness to learn is suppressed by annoyed parents in the home or by the standardized education of the schoolroom. "In the average school," says Myers, "the child soon learns that he rarely may ask a question lest he interfere with the routine of the class." [7]

Fear of ridicule by teacher or classmates is a powerful repressive force that quickly reduces a sensitive child to passive indifference. Ninety-six out of one hundred pupils in the seventh and eighth grades of one school admitted fear of being laughed at for their mistakes if they asked questions in the class.[8]

The age of which we are speaking is the time when children want to know How and Why? Their little world suddenly becomes enormously enlarged and they are curious to know what it means. It is not lack of contact alone that makes "the content of children's minds" so meager "on entering school." It is the failure of those who have had them in charge during the preschool period to understand the meaning of mental growth. The kindergarten has done its best to nourish in little children the flickering flame of inquiry but it is difficult to remodel the work of affectionate parents who have the mistaken notion that mental development and physical growth are synonymous.

From three to six, children use the correct method of scientific thinking. They see something which seems to refute what they have been told, and they want the disagreement explained.

A boy of five, for example, who had been told that trees need soil, when taken on a mountain cog-road up to timber line, asked, "How do these trees grow on rocks, and why are they so little?" At another time, a girl of four, watching a snake, wanted to know how it ran without legs; and a four-year-old brought a dozen different kinds of plants to his father with the scientific remark that his kindergarten teacher had not told the truth when she said that plants "drink water," because he had looked at all of them and not a single one had a mouth.

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[7] Garry C. Myers, *Journal of Educational Method,* December, 1928.
[8] *Ibid.,* p. 132.

A boy of six, again, when shown some spirit photographs, shocked his believing father with the sage observation, "Say, dad, I don't believe that stuff, because all of these spirits have clothes, and clothes don't have souls." Perhaps if the questions of children were taken more seriously, we would not have had the pathetic exhibition of a state governor suggesting to the delegates of a recent meeting of the National Educational Association that "intelligence be tested by finger prints, because all cells of the brain are represented in some of the physical organs of the body."

Desire to know—to understand—does not thrive in an uninterested environment. Enthusiasm breeds enthusiasm, and indifference kills it. Childhood interests are delicately sensitive to their reception by adults. The child sees, hears, wonders, and asks. From three to six the craving for information and explanations is *insistent*, *persistent*, and *annoying*. Because it is troublesome, it is suppressed. Not knowing how to answer the questions, and not wishing to be bothered with looking them up, the father and mother use the adult prerogative of repression. This is a defense against too active zeal of those over whom they rule.

If parents would only realize that good or bad traits in adults begin in the early years, there would be less difficulty in getting a hearing on this subject. The baby is so little that it doesn't count, except for ornamental purposes; the two-year-old, who entertains himself without disturbing other people, is an "ideal child"; the three- and four-year-olds begin to be a bother because they are now getting so vitally interested in what is going on around them that they make trouble in more ways than one. Were more intelligent attention given to this early period, we would have fewer adults with peculiarities that place them on the pathological border line beyond which the institution for mental diseases gloomily looms in the distance.

A recent investigation [9] of New York State children, going back over a number of years, showed that between four and five out of every hundred of the boys and girls born in that state during any year, as for example in 1927, may be expected ultimately to enter a hospital for mental diseases. And the tragedy of these appalling figures is that many of these youngsters need not have gone to such an institution had parents and teachers had more knowledge of the ways in which the personality of children is crippled and finally deformed beyond recovery in the home and school.

Naturally, the investigation just referred to did not include cases too mild for admission to a hospital. If a man keeps out of the insane asylum he passes as normal, though no one may care to have anything to do with him; and if a woman need not spend months in a "rest cure" or sanitarium she, again, is assumed to be normal, though she may be making her home a place of torment to the other members of the family.

The physician in charge of a habit clinic told the writer recently that if all of the children whose parents are to blame for the condition of these youngsters were removed, he would have no patients. One case which he mentioned is worth a passing notice. A small girl was irritable and judiciously successful in her methods. If she didn't get what she wanted, she threw herself upon the floor and staged a spasm to get her wish. She is a child of well-to-do parents who adore her. Indeed they love her so much that they cannot bear to see her going through the various stages of choking from her screams. Consequently, when one of the spasms begins, they always yield to her desires in order to save her life. They do not know that spasms are a part of the game to force her mother to her wishes. Children are wonderful little psychologists. They belong to the "behavioristic school." They know that what is going on inside of them will be judged by their objective behavior.

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[9] H. M. Pollock and Benjamin Malzberg, "Expectation of Mental Disease," *Psychiatric Quarterly*, October, 1928.

This is only one of the many home conditions that finally send children to the habit clinics. Unfortunately, few well-to-do and wealthy parents avail themselves of these clinics.

Habit clinics have some points in common with the "rest cures" to which wealthy women go. They are places where children go to recover from the abnormal home conditions. The effort of those in charge of the clinic is directed toward changing the beginning pathological habits into which the children have fallen. After a period of treatment, they are returned to their homes where the same conditions again renew the habits that sent them to the clinic.

While children are attending these "mental sanitariums" their parents should also undergo a course of habit treatment. In some way the vicious circle ought to be broken. The circle, which begins with the lack of knowledge of the neurasthenic mother, continues in the disturbed mental poise of the child, and follows the same old course in the home, never deviating from the vicious path of parental irritation, nervous response, and repeated irritability alternating with sentimental indulgence of the child.

One of the powerful religious orders used to say, "Give us the child until he is six years of age, and we do not care who has him afterwards." This statement contains more truth than is implied in mere religious instruction. One might almost say that at six years of age the man and woman have been made. Let us remind the reader of what we have said before about the common notion that children will outgrow the vicious habits and tendencies which they have acquired during the period when their personalities are being made. This belief is a myth.

The fallacy of this hope is seen in the men and women who are not made over. Many of your acquaintances are proof of this. You know that if you were given the opportunity to remake them you could do a better job. Some of them only escaped by a narrow margin one or another of the various asylums that are known by more euphonious names. Their mental outbursts are not quite dangerous enough to jeopardize the lives of those with whom they come in contact. They only make themselves obnoxious to those with whom they deal.

The number of neurasthenias is so large that it almost equals the famous fifty-seven varieties. In this brief introduction it will be impossible to enumerate them. Perhaps, however, we should mention motor impulsions or agitations and what the psychiatrist calls systematized obsessions. In addition to these there are, of course, cases of abnormal jealousy, stammering, pathological conscientiousness, and emotional and mental disturbances caused by shocks during childhood.

Illustrations of motor impulsions may be observed in the rather numerous cases of spasmodic jerks and other sudden muscular movements for which there is no adequate cause. These movements are called tics by children's doctors. All of them have an original cause, but they have now become a habit which is carried out regardless of any justifiable need in the immediate environment. Dr. Tom Williams cites the case of a girl who came under his care because of numerous grimaces and gestures. These muscular movements were so pronounced that she was thought to be suffering from chorea. It had been necessary to place her in a sanitarium, and after a month she recovered, but during this interval she suffered from insomnia and inability to hold her attention to her work because of "nervousness." The cause of her muscular nervousness was found by Dr. Williams to be instruction given by her mother in breathing exercises. The distressing notion which she gained from this instruction was that her expired breath was harmful. This thought was exaggerated until the idea that her bad breath might injure others became an obsession.

The important point, perhaps, in this case is the concrete evidence that good ideas may be given to children in such a way as to produce harmful effects. Evidently training children is a much more serious matter than is commonly thought if valuable information may be given in such a manner as to produce serious results.

Jealousy is so common among children that it hardly requires illustration. A boy or girl may be jealous of a brother or sister. The affection which parents show to one child may create in the other a hostile attitude which ultimately settles in the mind in the form of jealousy or in a feeling of inferiority.

Many neurasthenic adults are still children in their behavior. Mentally and emotionally they have not grown up. They are irritated unless they have their way. Some of them continue to show the jealousies and other complexes which they acquired in early years. There are more adult children in the world than is ordinarily thought. These people who have never matured, who in their behavior have never passed beyond the stages of childhood, are incompetent as parents. The various clinics for children, the psychiatric clinics, the habit clinics, and child guidance clinics, are filled with small boys and girls who have been mentally handicapped by childish mothers and fathers. Not having grown up mentally these parents put all the blame upon the perversity of their children. Yet many of them mean well. They are the product of bad training in their own childhood.

Parents, having failed with one child, are likely to go to the opposite extreme with the second. The writer has observed many such instances. A mother comes to him and says: "I failed so completely with my older boy, that I am doing just the opposite with his younger brother. But I am not succeeding any better."

More emotional disturbances begin in childhood than is commonly thought; and often they are the cause of the difficulty in management. The full effect of these "stirred-up" feelings, often so vague as to disclose themselves merely by restlessness, does not become clearly evident until the wear and tear of young manhood and young womanhood have broken down the bodily resistance. When the physical and psychical vigor have deteriorated, the nervous disturbance may become pathological. Then friends wonder why the young woman has become a chronic invalid. The answer to this question is to be found in the preschool period, in the overrigorous, unintelligent home discipline or in the complete lack of discipline. Poise, seeing things in their right relations, understanding the urges and needs of the child, not yielding because of sentimental affection to every whim, but furnishing healthy outlets for the activities which the preschool child needs—these are some of the things which parents must bear in mind at this early period. We must not forget that children should finally grow up.

We do not want to make little adults of them, but if they do not begin to meet the realities of life it is a commonplace statement that they never will succeed in doing so. Behavior patterns are being fixed.

Parents like to think that they will begin next year with the discipline which leads to self-control. At present the child is too frail. It may injure itself in one of its "attacks." Besides, during these early years children should be happy, and restraint interferes with their pleasure. Yes, children should be happy; but there are different kinds of happiness. Continual gratification of desires gives momentary pleasure, and the child probably thinks that he is happy; but this is only evading the realities which are just as important for the five-year-old as for the young adolescent. Children who are led to believe that life is a continuous joy ride never learn to meet situations with which they are contending from the moment of birth. Mere adaptation does not help a child to grow up. Adaptation is acquiescence. It does not contain the initiative factor, nor that of self-direction.

Evading difficulties does not lead to growth. Evasion is perhaps the chief explanation of the childish actions of many adults. Mere years do not mean maturity. If a child does not learn to meet the realities of life during the preschool period, it is doubtful whether it will acquire this ability as an adolescent.

An adult either feels adequate to deal with his environment, or he is hesitant and incapable of decisive actions. The feeling of competency should get well rooted in the early years; otherwise it is improbable that it will ever be attained. Get over the notion, if you have it, that something is put into children when they become older. The mental life no less than the physical is a growth. A young child tries to reconstruct his little environment, and, if he cannot reconstruct it, he accepts it without nervous irritation. This, at least, is what a child must learn if pathological dangers during adolescence are to be escaped.

Children should learn to accept situations which are not altogether to their liking. The world, even our own little world, cannot be reconstructed for our own pleasure. It is unnecessary, however, for purposes of discipline to make a child's life needlessly disagreeable. There are occasions enough when parents must refuse the requests of their children without hunting for them. But if a child's world is a continuous round of self-gratification, strength to meet the unpleasant realities will never be acquired. Mental force and poise, which we sometimes call character, is acquired by meeting obstacles. Muscular strength does not develop without being employed against continually increasing resistances, and the same thing is true of the mind. Growth to maturity is not a series of jumps with new abilities appearing suddenly out of nothing. It is a progressive series, one stage emerging out of another, and each starting where the previous one ended. The parents' task is to create such an environment that the child will successfully traverse each of the early stages in his development, and will get out of them all of the energy for growth which they contain.

If we are right in what we have said, it is quite evident that the child is not going to grow into a responsible, thoughtful man or woman without intelligent guidance. Adultness is physical growth. It may or may not be identical with maturity. In any case, it is the product of the child's reactions to the conditions to which he has been exposed. A human life does not just grow. It is built, and the foundation is laid during this preschool period.

Child training is either positive or negative. It is never indifferent. Children are being taught to meet situations which cannot be avoided, or they are not trained to meet them, and the result of this positive or negative training is being laid down in the nervous system of the child. Mental growth at every period is influenced by what has taken place during the preceding years. This is true of the physical organism, and it is no less true of the mental. A child, poorly nourished during the preschool years, is physically weak at adolescence. Is the mental nourishment less important?

Two outstanding defects suggest themselves. Both are the result of bad training in the home, and each is emotional. We refer to the pampered child and to the one who is overcontrolled and suppressed.

Pampering, of course, results from mistaken affection. It is difficult for parents not to yield to the child who begs and pleads to be allowed to do what it wants to do. The sulker and the self-pitier is almost certain to develop into a depressed, moody adult. Yielding to whimpering is bad from every point of view. It should never produce results in the home; yet it usually does. The reason, as we have indicated, is, in part, affection for the child. Another equally potent cause is that the parents grow weary of hearing the whining and begging. If the mother would begin at the birth of the infant to refuse entreaties, there would be no whining. Like other organisms, children adapt themselves to the conditions that surround them. The baby in the cradle ceases to cry when left alone if crying produces no results. This is an unconscious adaptation to requirements. The three-year-old is more conscious of cause and effect. He very quickly learns that crying does or does not bring results. If it does not, he ceases to whine for the simple reason that whining requires effort and no child wants to go to unnecessary trouble.

We are also confronted here, once more, with the evasion of reality. This phrase has become almost a catchword in the recent literature of child psychology; but it is a catchword which has meaning. Unpleasant situations confront a child as soon as it is born, and from that time on life is a mixture of joy and sorrow. Let us not take this word, "sorrow," too literally. Frequently the disagreeable is created by the attitude of mind. A five-year-old does not wish to pick up his blocks after he has finished playing with them. Sadness casts its gloom over the pampered child when unexpectedly compelled to clear the floor. Life loses its joy. But the reason for the sadness is that the demand of the mother is an unexpected requirement caused, perhaps, by some irritation which she herself has experienced with the housemaid. If the child had been compelled to put his blocks away when through with them from the day when first he began to play, life would not be so gloomy. It is the exceptional and, hence, "unreasonable" demands that children resist. If parents were more consistent in their requirements, there would be less gloomy hours. Fewer women also would find it necessary to visit the psychiatrist for "nervousness," and sanitariums would lose many of their patients.

The overdominated child also becomes a problem, and later is likely to be afflicted with conflicts caused by doubts and hesitations. While the pampered child evades reality by "working" his parents with tears, the overcontrolled child may escape from disagreeable situations by retreating within himself. This accomplishes the desired result by attracting attention to his gloomy moods and creating sympathy. A parent cannot compel action in a child who offers no resistance but who just looks sad. But let us look ahead a little. What will be the condition of this boy or girl in adult life? Men and women are impatient with those who retire within themselves and make up for inaction with a melancholy look.

Both the pampered child and the overdominated one are on their way to the psychiatrist. The former, because obstacles have never been overcome. They have always been evaded. The latter is on the same road because, by retiring within himself in childhood, he also was able to evade reality.

Inconsistency in discipline, alternately thwarting and yielding, produces an excitable, nervous adolescent, and makes a woman who lacks the poise that trains children who count among their associates. Overdomination, in turn, frequently leads to the fashionable "inferiority complex." An example was supplied a few days ago.

A young man came to the writer's office, saying that he was failing as a salesman because he had no confidence in himself. He was unable to meet people on equal terms. Inquiry soon showed that from the moment when he was able to walk his parents were oversolicitous for his welfare and dominating in their control. It was all done for his own good, he said. His parents were affectionate, but, as he put it, "they never gave me a chance. They were always protecting me, always directing me, refusing my request to-day and granting it to-morrow, but never assuming that I had any right to control my own actions."

Never assuming that he had a right to control his actions suggests the opposite danger. In the effort to allow children to control their own actions, discipline may easily cease to exist. Control is needed from the moment of birth, but the control should be thoughtful and lead to intelligent self-guidance as the child grows older. Authority should be used only for good reasons. Here the wisdom of parents comes into the picture. Wise management requires knowledge of childhood which unfortunately few mothers and fathers have. Allowing children to have their own way in order that they may express themselves is as dangerous as overdomination. Poise is needed in the home, together with a knowledge of the psychology of childhood and youth.

The one big defect in child training is failure to see the completed product which one hopes to make—to get a picture of the child as a physically and mentally healthy boy or girl. When this view is got, one has less difficulty in understanding the relation to one another of the various parts of the picture. An architect must see his structure as a whole before he can estimate the merit of his plans.

Many earnest mothers, convinced of the seriousness of the problems, get a distorted view by fixing their attention on one danger or another according to the particular child-training cult to which they have become addicted. Inferiority, introversion, too great dependence upon mother or father, sexual abnormalities, and mental conflicts, are real problems which parents and teachers should understand; but when the attention is focused too exclusively upon one or another of these, the picture is distorted.

Emphasis upon one tendency may produce other defects quite as serious. Indeed, the emphasis itself, when unwisely stressed, may even promote the very tendency which parents are trying to control.

A certain original endowment is inherited, but this is not the personality. It is the basis—the foundation—upon which the personality is built. The moment a child is born, the environment begins to act upon his rapidly developing, plastic nervous system, conditioning certain responses and establishing types, or patterns, of behavior. These fixed reactions to the stimuli of the environment create the personality. In early infancy these stimuli are what the mother and nurse do—the consistent firmness which is or is not shown, and the general atmosphere of the nursery.

When the infant reaches the nursery school and kindergarten age, its environment becomes enlarged to include the stimuli produced by playmates and teachers. It will be observed that the teacher is gradually playing a more important rôle in this drama of life; and that he may act his part intelligently, he should get what is called a clinical history of each child about whom he has the slightest doubt. It is not one habit or another that makes the personality. Neither is it their arithmetical sum. Rather, it is the integrated outcome of the interaction of habits, and the effect of this interaction upon the original endowments of the child.

Two personalities cannot be identical, because the varying inherited structures cause a different response to the same stimulus, and, again, because the same sequence of stimuli never occurs in the environment of two children. Inherited differences, even in two brothers or sisters, and the resulting variation from the same treatment, make close observation of the developing personality important in order that undesirable tendencies may be checked by changed conditioning stimuli or, to put it more concretely, by altered treatment in the home and school.

We are urging, the reader will observe, a method by parents and teachers that is both constructive and preventive—constructive, because the right conditions for normal development are provided, and preventive, since conditions unfavorable for healthy mental growth are removed and other incentives substituted. To put it briefly, the method is thoughtful observation of the habits of behavior which are being formed, and guidance of behavior habits, by planning and, when needed, changing the habit-making features of the environment.

Teachers and parents, we have said, should get a clear perspective of the whole process in which each contributing factor will fall into its proper place and be weighed in proportion to its value when considered in its relation to the other factors and to the picture of a healthy personality as a whole. Discipline, for example, is important; but it may be administered in such a way as to mar the personality. The child may become self-reproachful, resentful, or deceitful. He may be intellectually superior, and emotionally inferior. He may be docile and weak, or obedient and strong. Or, again, he may obey because of fear. Once more, stubbornness may be the type of reaction that is forming. Why? What are the conditions in the environment that are causing it? Why does a child do what he does? Why is he lazy? Why unmindful of requests of teachers and parents? It may be because of some organic defect. He may have eyestrain, adenoids, insufficient or excessive activity of internal glands. Why is one boy open and frank, while his brother is secretive and moody? Why does one confess his misdemeanors generously, while the other offers subterfuges when caught? Why is one indifferent to those about him, and the other thoughtful and considerate? "There's a reason" in the way in which the different factors of home and school have combined in the melting pot of personality.

Notice that we are getting back of actions—objective behavior—to the reasons behind them. It is the causes of actions—motives—that reveal the forming personality, and the discovery of these causes, while the personality is still in the plastic state, is the task of teacher and parent. The "will" is not a "faculty" unrelated to the organic condition or to the mental and emotional stresses. Character is built out of the reactions of a child to his environment, and will is its expression.

Getting a clear view of a healthy-minded boy and girl—the kind that parents and teachers want to make—is the first need in child training. Then one is prepared to notice deviations from what is called the "normal." But it is the causes of these variations rather than the changes themselves that are important. The behavior that makes the child a problem is merely a symptom of what is going on inside.

Physicians formerly treated symptoms, and their patients died. That was before the doctors knew that similar objective signs—the same "behavior" of the body—may have any one of several explanations. Now they search for the specific cause of a bodily ailment. This is also what the nursery-school and kindergarten teachers do with the timid, emotionally explosive, obstinate, or nonsocial children who come to them. They have learned that maladjustment has many causes, and they study the clinical picture to discover the one that explains the deviation of the individual child. Their aim is to produce a healthy personality.

School-teachers, to whom the preschool children will shortly come, should study preventive maladjustment. Would they do this, they would remedy many of the mental and emotional deformities that are produced in the home. Unfortunately many teachers are still in the symptom stage of pedagogy. For them, laziness, failure to give attention, and misdemeanors are signs of conscious willfulness that must be cured with a dose of "school management" or classroom "methods." It can hardly be otherwise until mental hygiene in the training courses makes teachers into mental sanitarians.

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CHAPTER III

THE CHILD MAKES HIS DEBUT

CHILDREN, we have said, enter school throbbing with excitement for the new experience. Even if their interest has been dulled at home, though they have become blasé, surfeited with a confusion of orders that had no goal, they are, nevertheless, ardently eager for the new adventure. They are going out into a bigger world than they have known, and they are keen for the marvels that await them behind the schoolhouse door.

But it is not long before their enthusiasm wanes. The adventure loses its charm. It has become one of the commonplace facts of an insipid life. Why this change? Why does the ardor of the children seep away until pedagogical stimulants must be applied to arouse even the semblance of interest? Many explanations have been given, reasons conjured by the defense mechanism of the teachers. The studies are not practical enough; they do not train for life.

It is rather curious, this suddenly discovered interest of even grade school children in adult life. As a matter of fact, if there is one thing about which they are not concerned it is life ten or fifteen years ahead. The Now is what interests them, and it is for this reason that their studies should be made to appeal to them at the time when they are taken. If any thought is given to the future, it is a fleeting pang that sometime they may be as old and as uninteresting as their teachers.

The curriculum, in the opinion of the writer, is what the school makes it though the studies remain the same. If teachers would remember that they are training individual personalities, that the subjects of study are to be fitted to the child and not the child to them, the enthusiasm so noticeable on entering school would be increased by compounding the interest from accumulating zealous fervor.

The course of study in the public schools has long been a controversial question and perhaps it is well that it should continue to be discussed. Settled questions mean intellectual death.

Naturally, the school will be treated in this chapter only so far as it bears upon the psychology of childhood; but even when thus limited, "the case," as Sherlock Holmes might say, "has several interesting features." The rather common assumption of parents that they know just what their children should study carries the further implication that they have already decided the future occupation of their boy and girl. This is one of the disturbing phases of unintelligent parental control.

The effort to satisfy parents, to awaken their interest in the work, to keep children in the schools, and to meet the so-called practical needs of life has had two unfortunate results in recent years. The first is the introduction of vocational subjects with meager content, and the second is the effort to make good citizens by teaching citizenship from textbooks.

With regard to the first, it is sufficient to say that the lives of many men have been ruined by confining them to a definite and restricted vocational course of study while they were still too young to know either their interests or capacities. Ability to grapple with life's problems, the present writer takes it, should be the aim of public school education. This does not mean competence exclusively in one set of studies. If a child is trained for one sort of activity alone, it may be found when too late that the young man or woman has no natural aptitude for that particular kind of work. How many boys have been compelled to take courses that fitted them for business, or law, or medicine, only to discover later that they abhorred the particular work for which their parents had preordained them?

Vocational courses have only one outlet. For many who take them they make life a lingering death.

Vocational tests give considerable knowledge of individual differences in abilities, but too many obscure factors are involved in the successful choice of one's life work to make the tests dependable at an early age. The only way in which this knowledge can be obtained is by throwing out tempting intellectual tidbits and watching those who seize them.

Vocational courses lack content and outlook. They pretend to train accountants and to fit for various other business positions; but they do not do it. They do, however, make stenographers. If, then, a few years later, a boy discovers his ambition, he must make a new start, and few have the necessary time or money. An illustration will make this clear.

A few days ago, a man of forty asked for a consultation and told the following story. His parents wanted him to be a business man and, consequently, directed him to take typewriting and stenography. After he finished the grammar school a friend of his father offered him a position at seventy-five dollars a month. It seemed like a good business opening for a young boy and, therefore, he accepted the proposition. Now, at forty years of age, he is getting a salary of one hundred and twenty-five dollars a month.

His question was, Is it too late to recover the lost ground? Is he too old to take evening extension work and get a new start?

So far as training in citizenship is concerned, this has been found to be one of the virtues that can best be produced indirectly. One of the outstanding facts in the psychology of children and youths is that classroom instruction in such matters is usually discounted. The effective method, as we shall see in another chapter, is organization for group responsibility within the school. Ideas of larger social duties and service are then taught incidentally. In this way desirable behavior patterns are begun.

Training in honesty, in recognition of the rights of others, and in the appreciation of good government should grow out of the spirit of every home and school. Courses of study in these virtues and in the other qualities which make good citizens have little or no influence on children. The behavior of associates, and the spirit of the school is what counts. Behavior and good citizenship, as put down in books, children call "bunk."

The complete misunderstanding of boy and girl nature by women supposed to be informed was shown by the strong support given in a recent meeting of the General Federation of Women's Clubs to the introduction of "personal economics" and "practical thrift" as major courses in the public schools. This illustrates the desire of mothers to shift their duties to the teachers. Having failed themselves, they want the teacher to do it.

Child psychology has definitely shown that the least effective way to impress a virtue is to use a textbook or to "preach" about its value. Children who have reached the age which we may call that of childhood discretion are likely to develop a mental resistance to textbook advice given bluntly or sentimentally, and books on these subjects usually exhibit one or both of these defects. They are too much like the virtuous literature of olden days in which the good boy and girl were happy ever after; and as for "preaching," children cannot be coaxed, scolded, or nagged into virtuous behavior.

If there is one thing that a boy of ten, or older, does not want to be, it is "good"—at least in the conventional sense. He abhors the sweet, obedient innocent whom he looks upon as a "sissy." The Jesse James type makes a much stronger appeal. A small boy, after his mother had given him an eloquent description of the heaven of good children, asked whether she thought that after he had been a whole week in heaven he might be allowed to go down to hell on a Saturday afternoon to play a little while with the bad children.

Teaching social virtues in required school classes is like reforming those in the outside world with laws. Legal statutes do not alter human nature. Prohibiting laws make a crime more exciting, and the danger adds to the zest of violations.

As soon as parents discover a virtue which they have been unable to inculcate in their children, they demand that it be introduced into the course of study of the public schools. Having failed to accomplish the desired end with their one or two children, they turn the job over to a teacher with fifty youngsters; and they want it done by means of a school statute. Make the children go through a textbook which tells them that if they are thrifty they will get rich. Nonsense! The youngsters know better. They see through the subterfuge and laugh at it. Besides, they are not interested at present in getting rich. Why should they be? Their parents support them, give them spending money and the use of an automobile. What more could the heart desire?

Is it then a forlorn, unsolvable problem, this hope of teaching boys and girls to be good citizens, to be thrifty, and to acquire the many other virtues that have no connection with arithmetic, grammar, and geography? By no means. The method is the indirect one, and this brings us to another psychological fact which many parents have not learned, and teachers are not using because it requires rare skill.

It is human nature to want to do what is forbidden and to dislike things which are demanded by rule or law. Business managers have learned that the least effective way to get results is to give orders and lay down requirements. This psychological principle is especially characteristic of boys and girls.

It has been observed that boys of ten or twelve, and a little older, will spend their Saturdays and other holidays working harder than they do in school, provided they feel that what they are doing is being done for themselves or for a reason that appeals to those of their age. This is the psychological principle that underlies the Boy Scout organization, and it is also the psychological factor in pupil management of classes and schools.[1] In both cases the children do harder work and more of it than is required in their school classes. Further, they do it during their recreation days.

Pupil management has fallen into disrepute because so few teachers were equal to it. Yet the fact is well known that one learns to do only by doing. It is a sad commentary on our educational system that boys and girls are kept under pedagogical control and direction during their entire school period, and then are sent out into the world with the expectation that they will be able to initiate intelligent action and acquire the responsibility needed to carry it through.

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[1] Those interested in this method of awakening enthusiasm for school studies will find many examples in the writer's *The Psychology of Youth* (Scribner).

The only solution that has been offered as a remedy for the unfitness of graduates of our public schools to assume the duties of citizenship is the study of a book in a class. Knowledge of our political institutions is, of course, essential. That every boy and girl should have this information seems obvious. But the knowledge of these facts does not make them good citizens. This has long been recognized since the evidence is overwhelming. Our young criminals are not recruited from the illiterate class. Yet, the demand is insistent that children be trained in citizenship, and by this is meant that they shall be taught from books how good citizens should behave. But ethics and morality are not the result of precepts. They are based on habits of thought, and habits of thinking are a growth. They are rooted in the experience that comes from behavior.

Recognition that initiative and responsibility arise only in opportunity for self-directed choice has led to the curious doctrine that children should be allowed to do what they want to do, that they should not be compelled to do anything which they themselves have not initiated and do not wish to do. The fallacy of this view lies in the emphasis on "compelled."

We have outgrown autocratic compulsion. Corporal punishment is justifiably unpopular. It was employed because it was the easiest and simplest way of meeting troubles in the school and home. But the assumption that the choice is between compulsion and yielding to the whims of children is erroneous. A third method, and the intelligent one, is to plan situations which will cause children to do what the parent or teacher wants them to do. This is conditioning their behavior.

We have said that this is the psychological principle upon which the Boy Scout movement is organized, and we have referred to pupil government in the schools. Pupil management we will not discuss because it has been fully treated by the writer in another book.[2]

Children must "direct their own choice," if they are ever to learn to do so, but they can be helped to make the right choice by planning and arranging situations. The fact that adults have made a mess of much that they have done does not justify the conclusion that undirected youths will manage better. Further, efforts to direct the choice of boys and girls will cause teachers and parents to criticize their own experience.

Of course adults, with the best intentions, will make mistakes. But, if they give thoughtful attention to the education of their children or pupils, their own experience will be taken from the field of the unconscious and assume the value that critical thought can give it. Allowing children to make their own self-directed choice without guidance reduces their experience to the same level of unintelligent, uncriticized growth that characterizes the experience of many teachers and parents. But coöperative work with children keeps the mind of the adult alert, and critical of the purpose and significance of education in making a reasonable and reasoning personality that is adequate to the realities of life.

Education does not consist solely in acquiring knowledge, nor in training in obedience, punctuality, and industry. Many of our worst citizens have these virtues. Members of the gangs at present engaged in outlawry do not lack them. They have the education of the schools, they keep their appointments, and are obedient to those whose authority they recognize. The significant question is, to whom are they obedient, and whose authority do they admit? Evidently the trouble with these men is their social or, if you please, their antisocial viewpoint. The methods and organization of the schools seem not to be very successful in this respect.

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[2] *Ibid.*, Chap. ii.

The view that character is not made by education and by the habits established in schools commonly regarded as good does not, however, stand or fall by the evidence from city hold-up gangs. The attitude of young men and women toward political corruption is a more universal proof of the failure of mere knowledge and of the commonly recognized school virtues to produce citizens for a democracy. A discouragingly large proportion of those with whom one talks are either indifferent to the present political corruption or regard it merely as "good business." Evidently something more than school courses of study is needed to make men and women in any other sense than years.

If we are right in emphasizing character building as the main purpose of the public schools, we should examine boys and girls to see whether they have any ready-made psychological machinery which can be utilized in this constructive work. Happily, this machinery has been discovered and is being put to work by a few mothers and fathers, and by more teachers.

One of the psychological characteristics of young adolescent boys and girls is their desire to direct and control—to manage. Discerning parents have noticed this because of the efforts of their children to manage them. The misfortune about this management is that the parents so frequently are unaware that it is being done. They might well take lessons from their children because this subtle, unostentatious direction of behavior is the method of child control. The problem is the same for parents and teachers. It is the creation of conditions that will appeal to this innate desire of children to manage something. Naturally, the "something" should be that which is desired by the unseen and unfelt personality behind the boy who thinks himself an autocratic king directing his subjects according to his pleasure.

A good school does not consist alone in good classroom work. The knowledge that the pupils get is the means with which they meet the situations that confront them. But their social attitude is the important matter. How will they view the school community and the larger national weal? The school spirit is the significant factor here. The creation of initiative and responsibility in children requires opportunity for self-direction. Responsibility must be put upon them. They should be encouraged to devise and carry out plans for the welfare of their class and school. But they should not be left to flounder in their own helpless inexperience. The suggestive but not conspicuous influence should be the intelligent teacher who raises problems and offers solutions, not by pedagogical authority but rather by his unseen coöperative influence.

Self-reliance should be taught, and initiative encouraged; but the question always arises, To what will the self-reliance and initiative lead? Children, as we have said, should do what they want to do, because otherwise they become either cheerful little deceivers or servile imitators, obedient to the one who happens to be in authority. But, let us repeat, "What will they want to do?" The answer to this question brings us back again to the habits of behavior acquired in the school and to the social attitudes which have become associated with these habits as an integral part of this organized social behavior.

Industry and obedience are taught, or at least forced upon the children, in the better schools; but thoughtful self-reliance and group responsibility require another plan, and frequently a different type of man or woman to do the guiding. Any one with a domineering personality can compel children to be obedient and industrious. Forced obedience, however, does not extend beyond the sight of the teacher, and industry, to be effective in later life, must be voluntarily accepted as a working principle. But the moment voluntary acceptance of any mode of behavior becomes a purpose, we find ourselves once more confronted with the necessity of organizing the school for self-directed group responsibility.

There are two alternatives, and only two, in school management. One is to compel industry and obedience. This method is unpsychological. The other is to organize the pupils so that they themselves will be the directive and, finally, the compelling force. This latter plan conforms to the psychology of children by using their native tendencies as the motive power.

The teacher thus becomes the unnoticed leader, guiding by organization and suggestion. The most efficient teacher is the one whose presence is least necessary because the children move under their own steam. They do what they want to do, but, convinced by the school spirit of the value of what the unseen mind behind the organization thinks they should do, they want to do what the teacher unobtrusively suggests. In this way not only are habits of industry and obedience acquired, but they are voluntarily chosen and acted upon by the children themselves.

Industry now becomes a plan of life because of its utility, and obedience ceases to be blind subservience to authority. It is adopted as a principle because it appeals to the members of the school as necessary for the attainment of the plans of the group.

Self-responsibility is acquired and initiative promoted by discussion of purposes, together with the ways and means of attaining them. This avoids the separation of the school from the business or professional duties in which the children later must engage. It bridges the gap between school and life, and it trains in social behavior because the school itself becomes a self-governing social institution in which decisions are voluntarily made for the good of the social group. Finally, the applications to the larger outside world, with illustrations from events actually occurring, give the moral and ethical training which should be an organized part of education in the schools.

This method, as will be seen, gives a psychological interpretation to the rather widespread notion that children should not be compelled to do what they do not want to do. The present writer has no faith in the doctrine that studies gain in value in proportion to their disagreeableness. Nevertheless, following the unintelligent whims of children leads to the "soft" courses that lack both training and content.

Few wish to work if they do not need to do so; yet, in curious contradiction to this, neither boys nor girls respect a teacher who does not in some way produce a study "atmosphere." Human nature is made up of strangely conflicting tendencies. We are indolent, yet we like to work if we find something which we think is worth doing.

Perhaps here we have the essential characteristic of a good school, namely, the ability of the teachers to make the studies seem worth while to the pupils at the time when they are taking them.

It is not our purpose to discuss the curriculum, but a few things significant for the psychology of childhood should be mentioned.

Until children reach the third or fourth grade they are intensely interested in their work. Then their interest sags and gradually enthusiasm vanishes. Why?

That this drop in the curve of zeal occurs at the ages when investigations have shown interest in reading and in scientific phenomena to be rising is suggestive. Ardor for anything is largely dependent upon a stimulating environment. The evidence indicates that it is not the subjects of study so much as the method of teaching them that is at fault.

Biography is absorbingly interesting to children, though at certain ages enthusiasm for the marvels of nature runs it neck to neck. Should not the discoveries of great men be the approach to physics and chemistry, and the curious lives of selected animals be the beginning, if not the end as well, of zoölogy? We must remember that a very large proportion of boys and girls who have not dropped out earlier close their books during the high school period. Therefore the question, What will be most valuable for these pupils? is important. So far as the psychology of childhood is concerned, the problem is the one which thoughtful teachers should always face, namely, What approach to the subjects, and what material, will appeal to the boys and girls as worth while for them now?

As regards English, the psychology of childhood gives a definite plan of which there can be no doubt. Writing stories—stories of adventures which the children have had or wish to have—is the method, for that is what youngsters always want to do until their enthusiasm for story writing has been chilled by the icy atmosphere of the school refrigeration plant.

We have briefly discussed a few of the school problems upon which the psychology of childhood throws some light. Children have springs of action which have either dried up in the adult or have found an outlet through new channels. A few men, and some women, hunt wild animals in the primitive forest and jungles; but most of us get our adventures vicariously on the bleachers of the football stadium, or by killing people with automobiles at fifty miles or more an hour.

The art of managing boys and girls—of getting them to refrain from the things which they should not do, and of doing what we in our wisdom or ignorance think that they should do—consists in finding the source of their springs of action, and then in directing the current through channels that will do productive work in their intellectual and social development. We have tried to show some of the ways in which this may be done.

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CHAPTER IV

THE AGE OF THE VANISHING QUESTION

WHEN the cause of yellow fever was first discovered and the possibility of totally eliminating it from the list of scourges was foreseen, the greatest obstacle was the psychological attitude of the people of the South. They had suffered so much and so long from the pestilence that they had no hope of relief. The same apathy, based on the same feeling that matters are about as good as they can be, that great improvement is not to be expected, and that we must make the best of bad conditions—chiefly human nature—is seriously interfering with rearing and educating children.

Children enter school, we have said, with intense enthusiasm. It is a new and strange experience, and they want to know what it's all about. Even if their questions have been suppressed at home they feel that now they are going into a bigger world where other children live and where teachers are waiting to receive them and tell them what they want to know. But before long they become apathetic, and school takes on the drabness which they vaguely thought they were escaping when they left home for their first great adventure. Why do they lose their enthusiasm and stop asking for information and explanations?

The title of this chapter is wrong. There is no age of the vanishing question. Questions disappear because there is no inducement to ask them. In the parlance of the school, there is no incentive. The class work must go on according to schedule. The "plan" of the lesson must not be disturbed.

The father of a boy who has just graduated with distinction from a medical school, recently told the writer that from the time when his boy was old enough to talk he has spent a portion of every evening raising certain questions for discussion in the family circle. Sometimes the questions were on geography, sometimes they related to history, frequently they concerned simple physical phenomena which were adapted to the understanding of the boy. He did not always insist that the questions be answered at the time. Often his questions took the form of wondering. "I wonder what causes this or that? I wonder what makes frost on the windowpane?"

In every case, books that would answer the questions, and were suited to the age of the child, were available. Frequently after the father had raised a question he would say: "Let's look it up." At other times the query would be temporarily dropped after he had aroused the boy's curiosity regarding the matter.

This father was not troubled over the name which should be given to his method of training. He was just building on suggestions offered by the questions of the boy. Like every observing parent, he had noticed the queries raised by his child at the inquiring age of three to six. He observed that these questions had a point. Some of them he could not answer, but he never let them pass unexplained. He met the challenge of his child with another challenge—that of investigation. "Let's find out what it means" or "how to do it." He was working by the "creative self-activity" or "project" method though he did not know it. Now let us take another case.

A recent writer, a scientist of national reputation, says that his first interest in science was aroused at the mature age of nine, when his father bought him some children's science books and arranged a laboratory where he could perform the experiments of which he read. The father followed his reading and work so that he might talk with his boy about his experiments and help him when he needed aid.

Lest the reader think that we are advocating making scientists out of prospective business men we hasten to say that our purpose is to take childhood's instincts[1] at their flood, to help them to develop, and to create permanent interests which will last throughout life. Incidentally, these interests will make the child want to spend a few evenings of the week at home. He will have something that he wants to do, and he will also be trying himself out in various lines so that when the question of his life work arises he will know something about his ability and interests. But another picture now comes to mind.

The writer recently spent an evening in a family circle with two young children whose parents had bought one of the "books of knowledge." For a short time the children were tremendously interested but then they wanted more information. The language of the book was not altogether clear. They wanted to have it explained, but it was not for this that the parents had bought the book. They had purchased it for the entertainment and instruction of their children. They had heard that it was a good book and they were serious in their efforts to educate the youngsters, but behind this purpose there was quite evidently another reason of which the parents were hardly conscious. They wanted to shirk responsibility. The father frankly said, "They asked us too many questions which we could not answer, and so we got this book to help them out, but they seem to ask just as many questions as they asked before."

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[1] This word is used without prejudicing the question: Are there instincts? The author's position on this subject will be made clear in a later chapter. At present no other word is so clear to parents and teachers.

If these true stories are fairly representative of the way in which questions of children are met in some of the homes of the more thoughtful parents, what are the facts about teachers? They surely encourage questions. Well, let us see.

The New York City schools are fairly typical of "good schools" throughout the country, and it so happens that some of these schools were visited a few years ago to see what chance children have to ask their questions.[2] The schools used for the investigation were selected at random, without any knowledge of the quality of class instruction. A skilled shorthand reporter wrote down everything that was said by both teacher and pupils, and, to the amazement of those who read the report, it was found that, in some classes, 85 per cent or more of all the words spoken were those of the teacher. The remaining scant 15 per cent was distributed irregularly among the children, and few of this limited number of words were questions asking for further information.

A superintendent in a large town did not believe that this report was correct and he decided to prove its inaccuracy in his own schools. You may imagine his astonishment when he found that his teachers used 90 or more per cent of the words spoken in their classes.

We are considering mental growth and some of the ways by which it may be aided or arrested. We have found that the question as a request for information vanishes. Why?

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[2] Romiett Stevens, *The Question as a Measure of Efficiency in Instruction* (Teachers College Contributions to Education No. 48).

Questions start thinking which is so essential to growing out of childhood in any other way than in years. Investigators always begin with hypotheses—suppositions—which spring from questions that have arisen in their minds.

The belief that one can think about a question concerning which one has no adequate knowledge is perniciously widespread. What intelligent man, in his wildest dreams, would try to think out the proper treatment for some bodily affliction or to settle a matter that requires legal knowledge? Yet this is exactly what many parents do about their children, and it is also the notion concealed in the idea of giving children freedom of action. Just let them do their own thinking and "learn from experience." In this way they will learn to control themselves. But will they? They will certainly learn to act. Indeed, they do not need to learn to do that. But will their actions be based on intelligence?

"My boy must find out for himself what life is," said a father to the writer recently. But that is not training. It's giving up the job. If this man's boy ever gets an intelligent view of life, and he probably will not, it will be at an appalling cost of time.

To be sure, boys and girls should be weaned from dependence upon their parents. This dependence is an emotional attitude which brings disaster as the child grows in years without maturing in character and personality. Responsibilities should be gradually put upon children. They should not only be encouraged but gently and thoughtfully required to assume them. The boy whose father selects his future vocation and the girl who always bases her decisions on what "mother would approve" will be afflicted with doubts, anxieties and indecisions later when their props are removed. As adults they will suffer from the mental conflicts of an undeveloped personality which may follow the years of emotional dependence.

The give and take of life demands capacity to make decisions and accept the consequences, whether good or bad, without the emotional perturbation that characterizes those who as children were dependent upon the support and approval of their parents.

Lest the literal-minded think that we are advocating disobedience we hasten to say that it is a gradual growth in accepting responsibilities which we urge. When the results of unfortunate decisions will not be disastrous it is better that the effect be suffered by the child than that he should not acquire that stable, self-reliant personality which is the product of making decisions for oneself. The mental habits of a child that are sufficient in the home under the protection of parents are likely to prove wholly inadequate in the strife of the outside world which pays no heed to the emotional dependence that was so dear to mother and father.

We have referred elsewhere to the widespread belief in the mystical value of experience. Even were it true that "experience is the best teacher" the unfortunate fact remains that by the time the needed knowledge is obtained it is too late to profit from it.

The mother of a boy of eighteen recently came to the writer to ask what she could do to overcome the deplorable effects of her management while she was getting the experience that is so highly praised. This mother is intelligent, educated, and the wife of a leading lawyer. The son is one of a type well-known in large towns and cities. At twelve, his intelligence quotient by standard tests was 110. He has played unsuccessfully with education until he is tired of it. He spends his afternoons and evenings at road houses, moving picture shows, or entertaining girls with joy rides. Now, approaching eighteen, he wants to get married, though the question of supporting a wife and family has not made a dent in his thoughtless, care-free life.

This picture is a distressingly familiar one. Whether it is equally common for boys of eighteen to abuse their mothers whenever a request or suggestion is made, as this boy does, to say that she is behind the times not to know that boys are no longer bossed by their parents, may best be left to the judgment of mothers who read this story. But it should be observed that the boy has ability which he does not use, that the father is a lawyer of high standing, and that the mother is an educated, intelligent woman who relied upon experience in the training of her boy.

A reasonable balance should be maintained in a growing child between the different types of ability. We must not forget that intelligence in its last analysis means ability to deal with situations, and there are many kinds of situations in life. Understanding them probably depends primarily upon intelligence, but the intellectual view is distorted by forces that confuse the picture. The native endowment of a child is only a part of a "big story," as newspaper reporters say. How much will the emotions influence behavior, and are they healthy or diseased? Will the child be self-centered and turbulent? Will he retreat within himself and become morose when action contrary to his wishes is demanded? Will he develop unconscious complexes that inhibit action and pervert behavior? Everything, you see, that plays a rôle in forming the personality comes in here.

Ultimately, children are going out into a rather cold world, and no one can predict the conditions which they will meet. Native ability may be of a good quality, but if it has not come into contact with the sort of situations that the young man or woman must meet later, it is like a knife made of excellent steel but unsharpened.

Assuming, again, that the child has been confronted with similar situations, how has he met them? Has he tackled them frankly and vigorously, without doubt of his power and without contemptuous suspicion of the motives of those responsible for the requirements?

We know that a certain quality of neural tissue comes with the birth of the child. It is, however, a mistake to assume that this brain tissue will always realize its full possibilities regardless of the environmental conditions. We have said elsewhere that intelligence tells what a child may do but not what he will do. We now add to this that the quality of the cerebral tissue has certain qualities which may or may not be realized.

In this chapter we are primarily interested in how to promote mental growth. Heredity has done its work before the child is born. The infant enters the world with a certain mental endowment. A definite limit has been set to its capacity, and beyond this boundary it cannot go. But will it reach the limit? Will it even approximate the outer confines fixed by nature? These are serious questions in which every mother, father, and teacher is interested.

That the mind grows to the resistance which it meets is a well-known fact. This is true up to the capacity of the mind, and provided always that the individual struggles to overcome obstructions. Besides this there is the ability to apply effectually what one has learned from conversation, from books, and from one's experience. Success in making these applications is certainly not inherited. It must be learned and learning it is not easy.

If we think of this for a moment with reference to adults, we shall see how true it is of them. The same mistakes are repeated over and over again, especially when the situations which must be met are somewhat altered. Notice how the same swindles catch even business men who are supposed to be "hard-headed."

In matters of everyday life incidental factors that have no vital connection with the difficulty are exaggerated and the real point of the problem is missed. In certain functional neuroses this is especially noticeable. Indeed, not infrequently it is one of their marked characteristics—overemphasis of nonessentials and sometimes even the creation of factors which have no existence outside of the imagination of the individual who produces them.

Children, of course, know nothing about the benefit of going up against situations and other problems which are a little more difficult than any that they have previously met. They hear, until they are tired of it, the statement that they should learn to overcome obstacles, but such advice quickly produces the contempt that familiarity, without understanding, always breeds. Children look upon these admonitions as just another attempt of those in authority, namely, their parents or teachers, to "put something over." This suggests an important chapter in mental hygiene upon which we can only touch. Children, like adults, are continually trying to escape from the realities of life. Realities are unpleasant because they are stern and rigorous. A child who has been the object of too much solicitude, who has always been allowed to do what he wants to do, is too delicate, mentally and emotionally, to adjust himself to the unsolicitous treatment that reality forces upon him. Having always been allowed to gratify all of his desires he does not know how to meet the strenuous conditions among people who are more interested in themselves than in him.

If youngsters lead a normal active life with an abundance of joyous adventures in which parents and teachers participate in spirit if not in fact, repressions and disturbing complexes are not likely to appear. These mental conditions occur in children who for one reason or another are excluded from conversation with intelligent and sympathetic adults about their inmost thoughts, feelings, emotions, instinctive eruptions, and ambitions.

In the earlier days, circumstances forced children to face and to solve many problems. "Forced" should not be taken too literally. The only compulsion was a difficulty which the boys and girls wanted to overcome because it obstructed the path to the attainment of something that they ardently desired. If they wanted some particular thing, they frequently had to make it. Very likely it was first necessary to fashion the tools that were needed.

Then, as now, things were always being broken and had to be repaired. But not then as now could the apartment janitor be called in to do the work, and no one thought of employing a carpenter or mechanic. The repairs were made by the boys and girls, assisted, if necessary, by the father. The brain was continually occupied with overcoming difficulties that the fun and work of the children might not be interrupted. It was a case of the mind growing to the dimensions of the problem.

Even the district school teachers, who had difficulty in keeping a lesson ahead of the class, were not altogether a disadvantage. Then as now boys and girls liked to "catch their teacher," and the writer's grandfather has often told with glee of the work he and his classmates did that they might learn enough to prove the teacher wrong.

We are not saying that those days were better. What we are emphasizing is that problems of one sort or another were daily confronting the youngsters and that the circumstances made them want to meet and overcome them. Whatever original endowment the gods had given them they used to deal with the difficulties that arose, so that they could finish the work that must be done before their fun could begin.

To-day, for better or for worse, all this has altered, and with the change has come the need of creating, artificially, developmental situations and conditions for boys and girls. In a signed letter, in a recent issue of the New York *Times*, C. F. Reisner says that he asked thirty boys who were shooting craps, why they were doing it and received the reply, "Nothing else to do."

The present writer is not concerned with the morality or immorality of shooting craps. Probably the game is just as moral as some of the business actions of adults. What the writer is interested in is the honest admission of the boys that they had nothing else to do.

Action and reaction are recognized psychological principles of behavior. They are the explanation of mental growth and of deterioration. If conditions are unfavorable for physical growth, if nutrition is insufficient, development is retarded, and the same is true of the mind.

Even with good teachers and earnest but uninformed parents, conditions may be unfavorable for normal mental growth. Emotional disturbances may be conditioned and get a grip before teacher or parent is aware of the trouble. It must be remembered that boys and girls are subjected to social and playground treatment which may be met in such a way as to cause the "medicine" to be continued. Children are rarely deliberately cruel, but they are thoughtless and when they discover that their jests hurt they enjoy the fun.

Some children are dressed by their parents in such a way as to promote mirth. Others acquire conspicuous mannerisms. Still others, because of the wealth or social position of their parents, get the habit of indifference or condescension toward associates. And others, again, seeing the efforts of their parents to become prominent, try to get elected to class or society offices. Children have a way of dealing with such associates which is likely to condition emotions that may be unfortunate. Either success or failure in these endeavors may create a superior attitude which, especially in case of failure, is often a defense reaction to the feeling of inferiority caused by the treatment. If they succeed, the conviction of superiority may produce emotional attitudes no less grievous. The "beauty contests," rather popular to-day, are an illustration in the case of girls.

Some children are born supersensitive, others are made so. In such cases adaptation is difficult. The demands and exactions of life outside of the home are impersonal. School associates have no patience with a boy or girl who must be humored. Excessive mothering in the home may make a child timid and apprehensive among companions who give the "once-over" treatment on the playground.

All children when young, are sensitive. They are little, and grown-ups are big. Their thoughts and wishes are different from those of adults. That is, they are easily made to feel that they are different, and when they get this belief they are likely to withdraw within themselves, for the things which they think and the feelings that they have are very important and precious to them. Whether this sensitiveness, natural to the very young, will extend into later years and disturb the mental growth depends upon the treatment received at home and in the school. Hold in mind the personality that you want to make.

Lack of opportunity for achievement not infrequently causes this sensitiveness to continue beyond its normal period and in such cases it is likely to take the abnormal form of supersensitiveness. A feeling of inferiority, which, as will be observed, we must often mention, may then appear with all of its disastrous consequences.

Without a chance to accomplish something or with opportunities that require too much trouble and effort, a child is thrown back upon himself. In such circumstances he may become too self-reflective, too much concerned with his own thoughts. At times, under these conditions, the boy or girl acquires unfortunate habits and becomes morbidly self-reproachful. Perhaps a secret vice has been suggested by companions and the child dare not seek counsel from parent or teacher. Yet it is not the "sin" that is so serious as the feeling of shame and fear of consequences which, relegated to the background of the mind, corrode the self-respect, happiness, and energy.

In other cases, a child without opportunity for achievement may settle down to a morose existence, doing fretfully what must be done and leading an irritated, unhappy life. This is the halfway house to nervous disorders.

A conviction of inadequacy is also likely to be produced which almost inevitably leads to an incapacity as complete as though ability itself were lacking. But, while opportunities for whetting the edge of the mind should be abundant, the tasks should not exceed the resources of the child. Success generates courage and stimulates initiative, but repeated failures react upon the emotions, causing discouragement that may end in a fixed conviction of incapacity with its accompanying lack of effort.

We have called attention to the importance of curiosity for the development of children's minds and we would be remiss did we not repeat the admonition with increasing emphasis. Nothing is better than a question, except another.

Probably all children have curiosity until it is suppressed, but the things or phenomena about which they are curious will depend upon the stimulation furnished by the environment. Geniuses quite likely inherit their interest in the subject in which they distinguish themselves but the great mass of children are not geniuses. They are just ordinary average human beings. Consequently, much depends upon the home and school.

Not only should inquiries never be discouraged but they should always be encouraged even when they are concerned with things outside the school curriculum or, in the home, with subjects about which parents are not informed. It has definite educational value when a child asks about some matter concerning which the father or mother is ignorant, to have an adult say, "I don't know. Let's look it up." Curiosity is the beginning and end of wisdom. It is also the fertilized seed of mental growth.

We are interested in the reaction of children to objects and situations because it is by reactions that "Ye are known." But the child is known by them quite as well as you are. For children, however, things and events are infinitely more important because they are the means by which development proceeds. The mind must work on something else it lies fallow, and an untilled mind goes to seed as quickly as an uncultivated field.

Objects, conditions, and events, then, are just so much practice material upon which the immature mind may work in its effort to construct, to learn how to meet perplexities, or to get a consistent, if not complete, sketch of the world in which the child lives. The mind is an unfinished tool for dealing with problematic situations. It can never be made perfect, but it can be made fairly discriminative in its judgments. It does not seem to be an exaggeration to say that a mind of average quality can attain a stage of development which will enable the individual to appreciate the evidence, for example, in favor of an antitoxin which makes one immune to smallpox or that cures diphtheria, if taken in time.

It is not creditable to the opportunities of mental growth in the home that children develop into easy prey for healing charlatans, ready-made victims awaiting fakers who make meaningless obscurity sound like wisdom. That people want to be fooled is as true to-day as when Barnum practiced the fine art of relieving them of their dollars and of their sense.

The majority of children do not take to ignorance and stupidity naturally. They do not inherit either. They acquire both in the home. Ignorance and stupidity in the average child are as much an acquisition as is knowledge, since the child by nature is inquisitive and eager to learn, but he loses this keenness under dull, monotonous, unstimulating conditions.

Mental growth is not a simple process. Many factors contribute to the making of a mind. We have been trying only to sketch the method to be followed. A normal young child, we have said, is eager to answer the questions, What? Why? and How? This is true of savage races and perhaps the primitive nature of children explains their naïve enthusiasm for knowledge. At any rate, after they become adults and conventionally civilized this inquisitiveness disappears. Then they seek artificial ways of brightening their dull, drab life.

The frenzy of many men and women to find some excitement for their vacant minds is a tragical drama when we remember that behind the scenes are their boys and girls also searching for something to relieve the monotony of their younger lives. The last act of the play is holding up a man just "for the fun of the thing," as a score or more of boys have said when the final scene was about to be carried through in the sentence to the reformatory. Is your home or school so dreary that escape is joyful?

To save children from the later growing pains of bored existence is one of the problems of mental training. We want to make them interested in the world about them and in doing that we aid their mental growth. But we do not need to build the fire of enthusiasm. All that is necessary is to catch the spark and nurse it before it dies out for lack of fuel.

Inquisitiveness is the gateway to the mental qualities essential to mental growth. Patience, industry, concentration, and exactness must be acquired, but these mental qualities are not so difficult to develop in children when the approach is made through the desire for discovery which is native to them. They are impatient with what they are not curious about and they do not see the importance of industry in things that do not seem worth while to them. But when their curiosity is caught these qualities are easily acquired, provided always the parent or teacher strikes while the iron is hot. Probably it is unavoidable that some subjects should be less interesting than others, but they can be given a derived interest through contact with things for which the child has a real, vital enthusiasm;

and the questions which they are eager to answer are more numerous than is commonly thought.

We hear a good deal to-day about making education interesting and the term "soft pedagogy" has been invented in derision of this notion. But easy and interesting are not synonymous terms. If the enthusiasm of a child be caught at white heat, he will work industriously, patiently, and with concentration upon the most difficult problem, simply because his enthusiasm has started an intellectual fire that will not be quenched.

No progress, however, is made in subjects that bore the children. The old idea that they gain some mysterious mental power by doing unpleasant things is nonsense. Fortunately, there are few things that cannot be made interesting either directly or indirectly.

The writer has known boys to spend their Saturday afternoons learning a mysterious alphabet which was as hard as any system of shorthand. They gave their recreation periods to the work because they wanted to record the secrets of the gang in hieroglyphics that only members of the order could read.

The wish to learn should be the driving force, but this desire is native only in the curiosity which all children have. Fortunately, curiosity may be turned to many things which thus acquire an interest that they would not otherwise have.

The child's desire to know should be stimulated indirectly through spontaneous interests, and then the knowledge which he needs will appear to be given as a favor. By this method discipline also assumes its proper place as a necessary but unostentatious feature in the scheme of acquiring interesting knowledge.

If parents would begin with their preschool child, collecting information to supplement the books which they buy, and would follow through the brief years into the school, sharpening and pointing the natural interest of their children, keeping abreast of them in their work, asking in the evening what their children have learned during the school day and adding to the significance of the information which has been received, they would prevent the loss of intellectual interest in the youngsters by proving their own interest in the knowledge which their children are getting.

The plea of being too busy is a product of the defense mechanism of parents. Ramsay MacDonald, despite the arduous engagements of political life, has always set aside time in the evenings to read aloud to his children and to identify himself with their interests and activities. Once again, to take another case, before Edison was twelve years old mother and son had read books together which would profit many men and women as well as start in their children a healthy intellectual competition with movies and joy rides.

The chief reason why boys and girls do not retain their curiosity and take their work seriously is lack of incentives in the home. The writer does not mean that parents consciously and intentionally withhold this encouragement. But something more than words is needed to keep the enthusiasm alive. Notwithstanding the apparent unconcern of boys and girls for the adult point of view, they are, nevertheless, affected by it unconsciously. If parents show no interest in the things which their children are learning, it cannot be expected that the youngsters will be uninfluenced by this indifferent attitude.

The things which a child is expected to learn should have meaning and significance for him at the time when he is learning them. This we have said elsewhere, but it is so important that it should be continually emphasized. Many teachers have discovered it, but parents do not understand the situation. They think that knowledge ought to be learned because it will be useful in adult life. They are impatient with information which has no such utilitarian advantage. We have no wish to deny the value of knowledge that is useful for adults. We are concerned, however, with the incentive and motive which must drive a child forward if his wish to learn is to be kept alert.

"Thinking," as John Dewey once remarked, "remains just what it has been all the time: a matter of following up and testing the conclusion of the events and facts of life." Children are always interested in the facts and events of life until their interest has been dulled and they have been made blasé by the drab life of their parents.

Teachers are continually trying to find or create motives for learning and study, but the motive is already present. It comes with the child. It is his curiosity about the facts and events of life of which John Dewey was speaking. The difficulty in getting children to study is not the lack of interest. It is failure to discover the spontaneous enthusiasms with which knowledge may be connected. The native curiosity of children in things which are going on about them is an unheeded cry for help in mental growth.

The complicated efforts of teachers to gratify this instinct of curiosity are among the interesting facts in the history of education. Teachers make all sorts of involved plans in their efforts to rejuvenate the childish curiosity which has been lost. These new plans go under various names at different times. The latest is "creative self-activity." When the present writer was a high-school teacher he heard much about "self-activity" without the "creative" attachment. "Self-expression" and the "project" method have served their day and been replaced by other phrases. The thought behind these words is probably as old as schools themselves. It is nothing else than setting a problem—something worth doing—before the children and trying to interest them in its solution. Why not face the facts and build from the earliest years on the curiosity which all children have until it has been dulled by mechanical school routine?

Boys and girls want to work with a plan or purpose so long as the purpose appeals to them. Why not make the work and plan worth their while from their immature point of view? The great difficulty with teachers is that they wish to impose their own purposes and aims upon their pupils, and the trouble with parents is that they have no clear purpose. They are at sea without compass or rudder when it comes to training their children. An illustration of the way to catch and feed the flickering flame of interest has just been told to the writer.

A father remarked a few days ago that his ten-year-old boy who had heard the word "evolution" used and had been told that Arkansas has just passed a law forbidding the teaching of it in the schools asked what it meant. The question of the father was, "How much shall I tell him?" The writer is of the opinion that there is no question too complex for children to understand if the answer is given in words suited to their age. This man believes in evolution, and is seriously interested in the training and development of his boy. He, however, was puzzled over the quantity of information which his child could absorb.

It is impossible, of course, in a brief discussion to give a detailed answer to this question. The father was advised to point out to his boy the similarity between certain of the lower animals in their development. It was suggested that he find a book which would picture the similarity between the bones of the limbs with widely different uses of different animals. Every one who is at all familiar with the structure of animals knows that when their limbs are stripped of flesh the likeness is striking. It was also suggested that he raise the question, What do these similarities indicate? and that finally, if the boy could not himself answer the question, it should be answered for him.

A few days later, the man gave the result of the plan which he had worked out more carefully than the sketch here indicates. At first the boy was puzzled. The similarities were so evident that he could not avoid seeing them, but it was only after various other questions had been asked that he suddenly saw the explanation and exclaimed: "Why they must be changed to meet the conditions in which the animals live." And then he added, "I wonder if it means that the higher animals come from the lower?"

"That was a tremendously exciting moment for me," the father said. "I wouldn't have believed that any boy of ten could have thought those answers out even with the pictures before him and with the questions that I asked. The experience gave me a new idea about child training." This is what the writer meant when he said above that the education of the children in the home should be looked upon as an adventure.

As children grow older they become a more serious problem. Some doubt whether the method which we have indicated can be applied to young adolescents. This much may probably be said: If the method has been followed during early childhood, the desire for knowledge has already become a habit of the boy or girl. The older children are unquestionably responsive to more remote motives than those who are younger. This gives a new fulcrum for the educational lever. The environment should create desires and then satisfy them. This method requires more inventiveness in the teacher and parent than the older method of compulsion, but it also makes the training of children more interesting because of the problems that arise. Solving problems always stirs a healthy metabolism in the brain.

Let us not forget that development is the reaction to the environment, and education is the creation of situations that promote mental growth. This is conditioning behavior, for reaction means action with reference to the stimulation caused by situations or conditions. If the environment is dull and uninspiring the children who react to it will be bored, and, unless they find their own more stimulating adventures, they will also be made stupid. Fortunately for the intellectual survival of the race, children usually find their own excitement if the home and school are too dull for endurance.

Parents should remember that bright intellects are not sharpened by monotonous surroundings. Monotony offers no adventures and it is adventure that whets the mind. Perhaps also the minds of parents would be keener and more adventurous if they themselves would look upon the training of their children as an interesting adventure, and thereby get out of the rut of conventionalism and tradition.

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CHAPTER V

INITIATIVE AND SPONTANEITY

INITIATIVE is admittedly essential to an efficient life. Every one knows men and women of good ability who do not count simply because they never start anything that is worth while; and when they join with others they follow along behind, like camp followers on the trail. A significant life means a life of action. Here parent and teacher enter the game.

It is quite true that there are those who, so to speak, start too many things. That is a matter of judgment, of seeing things in the right perspective. It is a question of intelligence and its use.

While, at the present moment, we are not concerned so much with intelligence as with mental energy and momentum, it may be well to say that, to a certain extent at least, getting a clear perspective is a matter of training. It grows out of practice in doing things, and in taking the consequences of one's acts. Learning by doing is a psychological principle.

Experience, however, let us again repeat, is not always the best teacher. Sometimes, indeed, it is the worst that one can have. Its service or injury to one's future career depends upon the criticism that it receives. This criticism is an examination of the experience to determine why it has failed or succeeded. This critical examination of one's behavior is rarely given. The surrounding conditions—business associates, perversity of human nature other than our own—usually receive the blame for failure. It is a rare individual who knows himself.

Here, planning—the organization in the home for the training of the children—again shows its importance. The reader will notice that we are continually emphasizing this organization. Let us once more see what it means.

Children cannot be expected to look ahead. They do not understand the importance for their future of what they are doing, or not doing. That is for the parents and teachers to work out, and even for them the problem is not simple. Successful child training, we must repeat, consists in creating such conditions as will make the child want to do what parent and teacher wish. This, of course, presupposes wisdom in those who are doing the planning, and wisdom certainly does not come without knowledge. The notion that common sense will meet the needs is a fiction. Common sense is called common because it is very uncommon. It, also, is not unrelated to knowledge. One never has common sense in matters about which one knows nothing.

We are talking about initiative and spontaneity. Boys and girls are unquestionably spontaneous. The important question is, What direction will their spontaneity take?

Initiative to be of value must be directed toward the accomplishment of something. The worth of that something is a matter of intelligence, and of knowledge; and here, again, we get back to the parents and teachers. If they have not a clear idea of the comparative value of goals it is too much to expect clearness of vision in their children or pupils.

Except in the case of unusually inspiring teachers, interest in school studies, when it is found, arises indirectly. A boy, for example, becomes stirred up over some invention and his interest spreads to physics or chemistry. A twelve-year-old boy has just taken out his sixth patent. At the age of ten he made his first attempt, and since then he has received six patents, each one an improvement on his first rather crude invention. A company has now been organized to manufacture and sell the product of this boy's enjoyment of doing something and the result of his parents' appreciation of his first unsatisfactory efforts.

Now training in initiative consists in getting children to set a definite goal ahead and then to go after it. Inventiveness of all sorts comes in here. Mechanical inventiveness every one admits requires initiative, but originality in ideas should not be overlooked. In child training, however, originality does not mean getting an idea that has never occurred to any one. If it is new to the boy or girl it is an original thought, regardless of the number who may have worked it out before.

Public-school teachers are continually trying to work out devices that will tempt the initiative of the children. They should do this and their efforts are proof of their educational zeal. But without the coöperation of parents they can do little. And coöperation means more than passive support. It requires a knowledge of the peculiarities, interests, submerged thoughts, and feelings of the boy or girl.

As recently as 1928, a group of boys wrote to the Rotary Club of one of our large cities asking the Club to appoint an "adviser" for them and furnish "a meeting place" where they might have conferences and get suggestions from the adviser. The letter of these youngsters ended with the significant statement, "We are waiting always."

This was a definite plea for help. The boys wanted some one with more knowledge and inventiveness than they had to suggest something worth doing and then to meet with them from time to time to keep them in the trail that would lead to the goal. It was a request for aid in initiating things—starting actions that would accomplish something worth working for.

The letter was short but it was a tremendously significant boy document. It blew away the smoke sent up by parents and teachers to save themselves from the charge of incapacity. "Boys and girls have changed since the war!" "No one can do anything with them now!" "They will not take advice!" Nonsense. Here are lads who beg to have something done with them. They plead for advice and help; and they do it voluntarily. This is an amazing and enlightening fact.

Parents and teachers have been conjuring up ghosts and then getting frightened at them. What really has changed is the conditions—the environment. Parents have not changed, and that is a part of the trouble. It would be better if they had, for the older generation cannot understand the situation, so completely have conditions altered.

Boys and girls have not changed. They are not now, and never were, "imps of Satan." Neither are they "naturally good," as one worker with youngsters recently claimed. They just "naturally" want something to do, some purpose that will whet their initiative. And the changed conditions—opportunity for more and greater excitement—have improved their chances to find "something to do" for themselves. As a result, they are less dependent on adults. But what will they do? Where will their initiative lead them?

About the time that the letter quoted above was written a boys' club was organized in another city. The applications for membership were so numerous that the clubrooms were in a state of siege. Two hundred boys were turned away on account of lack of room and scarcity of advisers. Two-thirds of those admitted cheerfully "confessed" at the first conference that they had come in conflict with the law. Many of these had been caught and punished by the legal authorities, and among them were not a few from "prosperous families." They wanted something to do and, since nothing was supplied, they found it for themselves.

Though it is self-evident that teachers cannot know as much about a boy as his father and mother should, it is nevertheless a curious fact that parents expect them to know more. This, of course, is one example of the human tendency to shift responsibility. The business of teachers is assumed to be to teach, yet the entire responsibility of making successful men and women out of all kinds of boys and girls is thrown upon them.

Childhood and adolescence are periods of great enthusiasms. These at least are the ages when the youths should become tremendously stirred up. It is not to be expected that they will always be excited about the same matters. Imitation, to be sure, is a strongly active force and for this reason it is not uncommon for associates to go in herds. This, however, is as it should be, because an associate's suggestion is only one of the many temptations to try out the interests and ability which should be put before a boy. On the whole, however, the suggestions of the crowd encourage passive agreement. Thinking is unnecessary when one trails along behind the herd. A tempting environment is needed if initiative is to be quickened. But originality causes disagreement, and dissenters are not popular in the home.

Parents rather commonly try to make their children into family adornments. To accomplish this boys and girls must have certain ideas—ideas which will be a credit to the parents—and, naturally, these ideas should be the conventional notions and beliefs. Thus children are confined in mental strait-jackets. They are not encouraged, nor, indeed, are they permitted to think for themselves. Not infrequently this results in deception and, at times, in repressions which may become pathological. It is partly the revolt against this suppression which has made freedom so popular in the recent literature of child training.

Even the future vocation of a boy is quite commonly settled by the father without any effort to "try out" his son's interests and abilities during the earlier years. Sometimes this parental determination of the child's career is the product of unrealized hopes of the father or thwarted ambitions of the mother. It is their compensation for unfulfilled aspiration, and the boy pays the penalty for the premature decision which has closed the door to the training that opportunity to initiate gives.

Many children do not develop—some do not even "grow up"—because there is no incitement to mental growth. These youngsters may "find themselves" later, but if they do, time and emotional energy are wastefully squandered in the mental struggle. Even native ability—intelligence—is not independent of the environment and its nurture. Encouragement of originality in thinking and in acting is a part of the stage setting of the play which boys and girls must practice in childhood if they are to act it successfully in maturity.

Emphasis on the home in promoting initiative in boys and girls should not obscure the rôle of the school in this big educational achievement of getting children started in something—one might almost say anything—at which they would work with resolute zeal could they but find their hidden talents.

Among the outstanding defects of teachers, observed by themselves and reported in a recent study, was too little understanding of the personality and trend of mental growth of the children in their schools. Teachers should *discover*, not determine, the plan of development of their pupils; and the only guide in this search is the vague longings of the child exhibited in the things he tries to do if encouragement is offered. It may be that what he would like to do is only distantly related to the lesson but that is immaterial for, after all, the lesson is only a means of growth, and if another way is better for the individual pupil it should be chosen. Let us repeat what we shall often say: It is personalities and not grammarians that the schools are making.

A very long time ago, Herbart laid down the educational principle that childhood and youth are the time when permanent interests should be established. Some of these interests will later serve as hobbies to which the harassed lawyer, doctor or business man will turn for recreation. But they also serve another purpose, and that is to train boys to carry through what they begin. Will they begin anything? Not unless the environment tempts them, and here is where the father and mother once more come into the picture.

We have said that childhood and early adolescence are periods of enthusiasms. Children, we must repeat, want information about so many things that parents tire of trying to answer questions about which they know little or nothing; and, finally, the child also tires of being told not to ask so many questions, and looks elsewhere for the excitement which he tried and failed to get in the home. Then parents wonder what has come over the youths.

Initiative to be serviceable in training must be directed toward an end. The goal may be only a little way ahead, as in constructive work, or it may look far into the future.

At all events, the habit of setting oneself a task and going through with it is the significant factor.

It is not to be expected that children will see the importance of this. They do not know that they are building for the future, and that the foundation of their success or failure is being laid.

Most homes are dreary to children beyond endurance. The monotony bores them. This is the explanation of their search for thrills. This craving, as is well known, leads at times to crimes.

A few years ago, the writer sent letters to about a hundred adults who were occupying responsible positions, asking what juvenile crimes they committed when they were children and why they did them. The answers were strikingly illustrative of the revolt against monotony. Some, when boys, had set fire to the school building, and a good many had started fires in old buildings. In all cases these men, looking back over their boyhood, said that they did these things because they had nothing interesting to do, and they wanted excitement.[1]

Men with business acumen have observed this craving for excitement and have capitalized it in the lurid motion pictures. These pictures make money for the owners, and show boys how easy it is to hold up men. Point a pistol at him —even a toy one—and his hands go up. It is both exciting and profitable. Why not do it? Ask the boys who are bored to extinction at home.

What young adolescents will do to get a thrill is largely a matter of suggestion. The consequences they do not consider. Those of well-to-do families know that their fathers will get them out of the scrape if they are caught. "I did many things when about fifteen that would have sent me to a reform school had it not been for the influence of my father," said a teacher to the writer a few days ago. "I and my associates discounted the reform school. We knew that our parents would prevent that."

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[1] See Edgar James Swift, *Mind in the Making,* Chap. ii (Scribner).

Violation of laws has great attraction for boys who are bored in their home and school. The automobile has not caused an increase in juvenile misdemeanors and crimes. It merely gives an opportunity which those of us who are older did not have when we were of an age to borrow them for joy rides and visits to distant road houses where thrills of diverse sorts and strength are to be got.

To say, "I did equally bad things when young, and my boy will come out all right," is unintelligent. Some of you fathers escaped disgrace because opportunities and suggestions for acts leading to crime were not as alluring as they are to-day. Moreover, what you did was done because of the monotony of your life. No provision was made for your spontaneity, for your desire to "start something."[2] You were left to the gods of chance. Is this wise?

Further, many of you are now paying the penalty of lack of opportunity when young to try your hand at various things. Some of you have not succeeded over well in the occupation into which you drifted. You have worked hard, but your preference, you now realize, was for another line of work. Your life has been a grind and you have barely made a living for your family. Opportunity to try out various things might have produced a different result. "I know now that I should have been a chemist," said a retail clothier the other day. "When fourteen years old I bought a boy's laboratory outfit, but my father refused to let me set it up in my bedroom. 'You would just waste your time,' he said. 'I want you to follow my business.' Well, I did follow his business. I hated it from the beginning and now at sixty years of age I am barely making a living."

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[2] See Edgar James Swift, *Learning by Doing* (Bobbs-Merrill).

Have you noticed, again, how quickly men go to pieces after they retire? And if you have, do you wonder why? Perhaps the answer was given by a man of seventy who had just retired from active management of his business. He thought it time to "put the boy" in charge, but, he added, "I don't know what to do with myself. I have tried golf but I don't like it. I never developed a taste for reading. Perhaps it is because we had no books in our home when I was a boy."

We have said that children will initiate their own activities unless they are aided. It goes without saying that the daily life of children should not be laid out by parents. There would be no training in initiative were this done. But it is equally true that growth in self-direction is not acquired by following the spontaneous suggestions of the moment. What is popularly called will power—the ability to choose one's course of action regardless of the experiences and training which have gone before—is a myth.

It is a matter of common knowledge that a morphine or opium eater finally reaches such a condition that no amount of so-called "will power" can enable him to resist the craving. The reason is that physiological changes have occurred which are irresistible. His system requires the opiate. The man must have it.

Why should we expect childhood experience to be any less dominating than a drug? Both change the organic structure of the individual. Each, again, produces a desire or craving.

Development of initiative lays the foundation for real will power. Boys who have been trained to "stop and think" before acting behave more intelligently than those who act on impulse. Thinking may consist only in giving conflicting ideas a chance to settle themselves but, if this is true, the earlier experiences of the child will play an important rôle in the settlement.

So far as the mental growth and stability of a youth are concerned, the influence upon his future career of the choices which his training in initiative has led him to make is far reaching. Assuming fair intelligence, this influence is probably a determining factor in the future success or failure of the adult.

Planning for guidance in initiative means, as we have indicated, arranging such conditions as will cause the boy and girl to want to do certain things. Intelligence alone does not determine what will be accomplished. This is settled by the environment of which, naturally, home opportunities and inducements are immensely important.

Spontaneous desires spring from native urges which have been called instincts. Curiosity is one of these urges. But the direction that curiosity will take is quite another matter. The things about which a child is curious are neither instinctive nor inherited. These will be decided by the environment. Primitive people, as we have said elsewhere, had an instinctive curiosity about certain natural phenomena, such as the wind, thunder, and lightning. But this curiosity arose from the danger caused by these occurrences. Their curiosity, however, was easily and quickly satisfied by putting evil spirits back of the events. Scientific interest, in any proper sense, they did not have. They named the cause and dropped it; a mysterious explanation of obscure phenomena was quite natural for them. It could not be expected that any other form of reaction would be conditioned, and children have the same naïve tendency to accept an explanation which does not explain. Naming the cause satisfies them because to the immature a name is an explanation.

Adults whose reasoning ability has not advanced beyond the level of early childhood reason in the same way. What caused that? is asked by men and women who have not grown up. And when the question is answered by "the subconscious mind," "brain waves," or "spirits," the questioner says, "Why yes, of course." Superstitions are rampant to-day. They run the gamut from belief in astrology, theosophy, and mind reading by brain or mind vibrations to devotion to one or another mind cure cult and spirit materialization.

Such conditioned associations as these stop further inquiry. They do not convince the adult or child of the necessity of investigation. They do not awaken new, derived interests because, when a question is settled it is dropped, since further investigation is unnecessary.

Investigation is the core of initiative. Moreover, children want to investigate until the spontaneous desire to experiment, to find and harmonize conflicting views, to understand, if they cannot solve the problem, is suppressed. Usually, the suppression is caused and the lid tightly fastened over their bubbling enthusiasm by an explanation that doesn't explain.

To develop and preserve scientific interest in children, they should be conditioned to inquiry, to a demand for valid explanations when they can be given, and to suspended judgment about matters which are uncertain. This is best done by questions. Sometimes an immediate answer should not be expected, but you may be sure that the questions bore into the mind of the child and do their work even when there is no objective evidence of the constructive thinking that is going on. Many times, during the writer's teaching in the grades, a pupil suddenly hurled at him the verbal bomb, "But that word doesn't explain." And the child was often right. The word was so vague as to mean anything and, hence, nothing.

Training in initiative is training in the choice of ways and means of reaching a goal, of solving a problem or of answering a question. It is development in reflection—in suspending decision until reasons, pro and con, can present their case. Then action should follow. This is training in using whatever intelligence a child may have. Those parents and teachers who try to accomplish this in their children and pupils will not only renew their youth, they will also find new interest in life. This is always the effect of trying to solve problems. Life in the home will be less monotonous. The boy will find something worth doing and this will lead to something else. He will learn to do by doing, which after all is the only way in which mental growth is possible.

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CHAPTER VI

PLAY AND ITS PSYCHOLOGY

PLAY is the chief occupation of young children and continues to occupy a part of the time of all adults who have not settled down into growing old. Since it fills so much of the time of children, the problem for many years has been, How may play be utilized for growth and development?

The particular activity in which children engage does not distinguish play from work. Play is a mental attitude. Any occupation which is carried on for its own sake because of the enjoyment that it gives, is play. It may or may not be carried on for the sake of results obtained. That is unimportant. The fact that the results are to be used in some constructive work does not necessarily relieve it of the mental attitude which characterizes play.

A number of theories have been suggested as the psychological explanation of the evolution of play. Animals and children play, some have said, because of excess energy which must find an outlet. Naturally without excess energy there would be little or no activity of any sort. This view is therefore a condition rather than an explanation of play.

Another theory which has been offered is that play is preparation for the business of life. If this theory is true we must assume that adult cats and dogs sit down and think out the training that is necessary to prepare their offspring for the serious activities into which they will soon be plunged. This is anthropomorphism with a vengeance.

Still another view is one which was offered by G. Stanley Hall. "I regard play," he said, "as the motor habits and spirit of the past of the race persisting in the present as rudimentary functions. . . . We rehearse the activities of our ancestors, back we know not how far."

The preparation-for-life theory which is rather popular, is not an explanation of the origin of play. To be sure, some of the higher animals do use inherited sporting tendencies to prepare their young for the serious work of life. But many decades have been needed to induce the highest of these animals, namely man, to use the play instinct of children in training them for the things which they must do later. Even now many teachers and parents do not know how to do it.

Further, the theory that play is a preparation for adult activities requires an explanation of the changes in play which different species, and even the same species, have passed through during their evolution. Why, for example, are the frolicsome joys of the donkey different from those of the horse? We can say, again, without much hesitation, that the sports of *eohippus,* the early ancestor of the horse, were quite different from those of his modern descendant. An animal with short legs and small body, about the size of a sheep, must have played games quite different from those of its present-day representatives. Why? If play is a preparation for life, then something must have changed that preparation. Who did it? How was it done? One would hardly say that, as the horse developed, each new and altered representative of the species realized the new sports needed to prepare its offspring for the new life.

Recapitulation justly fell into discredit because its advocates made too pretentious claims. They devoutly believed in an orderly sequence in the "unfolding of instincts" and in a serial recapitulation of play activities; and, since one is likely to find what one expectantly and confidently seeks, the evidence for exact recapitulation of human history was thought to be unimpeachable. Certain fears and dreams, thought to be inherited through the history of the race but now known to be conditioned, were explained by advocates of recapitulation in ways that were highly imaginative and easily ridiculed. The terror of infants at the touch of fur, which we now know is conditioned, and the not uncommon dreams of falling, are illustrations.

The claims of recapitulationists were so humorously naïve that when the behaviorists attacked all along the line of racial heredity the advocates of an instinctive basis for play dropped their guns and ran in wild confusion. "I would feel perfectly confident," says Watson, "in the ultimately favorable outcome of careful upbringing of a healthy, well-formed baby born of a long line of crooks, murderers, thieves and prostitutes."

By implication, if not as directly as Watson says it, we are told that the past history of human development has left no impression upon the race or on individuals beyond bodily changes. If that is true much that investigators in heredity believe has been proved, is only a "delusion" of the human mind.

But our interest at present is in the racial basis of play. Some sports are conditioned more easily than others. Why? Some can be successfully conditioned only at certain ages. Why?

Why do teamwork and the behavior code of Scouts make such an appeal to boys of a certain age? It is not merely that these ideas are conditioned. They are *easily* conditioned because of certain native qualities peculiarly characteristic of the gang age.

Try to condition this behavior earlier and see the result. You get the ideas started, and for a few days, perhaps, everything goes well. Then the group breaks up into small cliques or individuals. You must start all over again. The difference is that with younger boys the leader must be continually on the job, while boys of the gang age will run their own business, be it that of Scouts or of any other gang; and they do it about as successfully as though the leaders were present. Indeed, gang activities of boys of twelve or thereabouts do not need to be conditioned by adults. They start themselves. Why? Their characteristics will be determined by the environment, but gangs of some kind will be formed as surely as two or three boys of the right age are gathered together. Why does age make this difference?

The theoretical origin of play, however, is not so important for those of us interested in child psychology as the difference between play and work, and the use which parents and teachers may make of the play tendency. We have said that the difference between play and work is the attitude which one takes toward what one is doing. There is always a feeling of freedom in play. A conscious purpose leading toward some result, we said, may or may not be present. The activity is enjoyed for its own sake but this does not prevent the player from having a definite end in view.

Those who deny that play may have a goal toward which the child is aiming must deny that all constructive work is play. Is a boy, for example, working when he sets out to build a playhouse or when he digs a cave in the back yard that he and his friends may hide from the Indians? In these cases and in many others the child is working toward a definite goal, but the feeling of freedom from compulsion and the enjoyment of the activity for its own sake as well as for the result which he is trying to produce, transforms what would otherwise be work into play.

Strange, isn't it? What is the explanation of the apparent contradiction? The same actions called work in the home or school, and play in the woods! Remarkable! But if the difference in mental attitude is considered the contradiction disappears. It looks, then, as though we should create in boys and girls the play attitude toward their work. This does not mean, however, that the work will be taken less seriously. It is the presence or absence of enthusiasm that makes the difference.

When action is imposed upon a child against his will by parent or teacher he calls it drudgery. But in camp he does the same things and returns home saying that he has had a fine time. Creating in boys and girls the play feeling toward the things which they should do is child training. It is also education. It should, therefore, be the purpose and method of parents and teachers.

This sounds more difficult than it is. Though we discuss the psychology of pupil government in another chapter, it may be said here that, strange as it may seem to parents and to some teachers, school government and school management by the pupils themselves always create the play attitude though the work is carried on more rigorously and the punishments for malingering are more severe than when the teacher is the conspicuous manager of the work and the dispenser of penalties. Every teacher, however, does not seem able to carry on the school work successfully in this way, just as every young man or woman does not make a good leader in other organizations.

In plays and games which are unostentatiously directed by the power behind the throne, all of the mental activities that we wish to arouse in children are carried on. Observation, imagination, judgment, and reasoning may be used just as much in play as in what we call school work. If the work is drudgery these mental activities are at their lowest level.

This play attitude also has an immense importance for the future life of the boy or girl. Most of the worth-while things which have been accomplished in the world have been done by men and women because they couldn't help doing them. They had the same feeling of freedom from compulsion and the same spontaneous enthusiasm which the child has when building his playhouse or repairing his little automobile. Great results have probably never been produced by those who looked upon their work as drudgery. Only when the play feeling grips, when one enjoys immensely the thing that one is doing does one accomplish results that are significant.

Every age of childhood has its peculiar play interests. The kindergarten games are different from those of older boys and girls, and when adolescence is reached the sports again change. The play of small children, undoubtedly, has an instinctive basis but as the boy and girl approach adolescence games and sports seem to depend more upon the environment.

Speaking somewhat roughly, we may say that the plays of infancy are sensory and perceptual. Movements for the mere pleasure that they cause rather than for any result that they produce are among the joys of the play attitude during this period. Every one is familiar with the spontaneous movements of infants—movements of arms and legs, swaying the body, sitting up and falling down. All of these actions are, of course, increasing the muscular strength of the baby and practicing nerves and muscles alike in the control which they must exercise a little later when the child stands or runs.

The period of infancy, and a little later, has sometimes been called the period of destruction. Until the child is old enough to want to know how the "wheels go round," this period of destruction is probably one phase of the enjoyment of action. The creeping infant is probably not so much interested in destruction as he is in the noise of the destruction and in the movements that are a part of the devastation.

When the child has reached the age of finding out "what is inside," the motive, of course, is a different one. Curiosity is now one of the stimulating incentives and should be both encouraged and directed.

The baby enjoys sounds and noises, and is fascinated by what it sees. As he grows into early childhood, toys and playthings begin to have value beyond the noise which they make and the movements of handling and throwing them.

Construction now begins to replace destruction. Blocks, as every one knows, have interested children a little earlier. Now the boy wants to nail things together. He is trying to make something, though he may not know very definitely what the something is. Very soon, however, this thing that he is trying to make becomes more definite, but he is not yet interested in perfection. Indeed his imagination oftentimes sees perfection when the adult is unable to detect even the appearance of skill. At this time, also, he is not much concerned with the successful working of the object which he has made. His imagination sees that it will work and very likely if it fails he starts over again in the same crude way.

In general, up to ten years of age play is individual. During the earlier period children play by themselves with quite as much interest as though they had companions. Yet even now they should have playmates in order that they may receive the discipline which children give one another. Play is social during this period but it is not coöperative. It is individualistic in the sense that each child wishes to do either the same thing which his associates are doing or else he wants to do something which he thinks is more striking. In either case it is his own personal game.

This is definitely the "make-believe" period. The child's imagination creates his play world for him. He builds a playhouse big enough for his head and shoulders and imagines it is a real house in which he can sleep. This imaginary world should not be interfered with because it is natural for this age. Parents should help the growth of the creative imagination instead of discouraging it.

But the joy of playing by themselves gradually decreases from seven years on until approximately ten years of age when there is a definite and distinct demand for companionship in games. This is the time when competitive games arouse the boy's enthusiasm—jumping, climbing, throwing, running, and other active games to which rivalry adds its zest.

From ten years on the gang spirit becomes so prominent that parents and teachers must take it into consideration. We are interested at present, however, in the transition from what we might call the "child" to the boy or girl. Up to this time, sex differences have not been marked. Boys and girls have played the same games and have played them together. At about ten, however, certain secondary sex differences which have been more or less noticeable before are more pronounced.

Boys' games now become differentiated from those of girls and, speaking generally, boys prefer to play with one another. Exceptions occur, but if girls continue to play with boys the latter insist upon conformity to their code and standards. They are as intolerant of sissy girls as of boys of that type. Whining, crying, and appeals for personal favors in the games are not permitted.

Boys are now autocratic. They feel that they are made of different stuff from girls. Their games are rough, and if girls are permitted to join with them they receive no special consideration. It is "give and take," but mostly "give" on the part of the boys so far as the "weaker" sex is concerned.

When boys play among themselves the giving and taking are about equally divided except that at the early part of this period, when the youngsters are learning how to manage the new tendencies that are just emerging, a dominant bully, if strong enough, may get more than his share in the games. Otherwise, the rules of the game are followed. Up to this time rules have been largely nullified by boys, and they never receive much attention from girls except under "masculine protest."

Subordination to authority is now learned. This is seen on the baseball and football field. The boy yields his own fame for the success of the team. Sacrifice hits are made in baseball, and sacrifice hits are not sensational. But they help the team to win.

Is play engaged in for its own sake and does work have some ulterior purpose? In a general way this statement is true but it is easily overemphasized. The satisfaction found in play is not merely doing the thing. It is certainly not going through motions. The end sought is the important thing, and in this respect play resembles work. Consequently, we are again forced back to the distinction which we have made in the early part of the discussion. In the final analysis, the attitude of mind is the distinction between play and work.

In play the actions absorb the attention of the child while the purpose creates the motive and gives meaning to the actions. If one will watch the play of children it will be noticed that, usually, they are trying to accomplish some ulterior end. This end may be only a little way ahead. This is noticeable even in the younger children. Playing with dolls, for example, has the purpose of organizing a home with a mother in it managing her children. As the child grows older the end may be more remote. Several weeks are required to build the cave in which the boys may hide from bandits.

It is a mistake to say that the purpose of play is the pursuit of pleasure and then assume that the question is settled. Pleasure undoubtedly results from play, and occasionally it may even be a conscious motive, but if the reader will observe children at their play the expressions which are heard will show quite clearly that the motive is some goal or result which rarely includes pleasure as a conscious factor. An investigation on the east side of New York City revealed the significant fact that with these children the goal or motive was frequently absent and the purpose or object seemed to be to escape from monotony. This was shown by the fact that they did not know what to play. "Let's play," was frequently heard among these children and, after some one said it, all of them stood around not knowing what to play. Indeed, the question, "What shall we play?" frequently followed "Let's play." But none of the children could answer the question. They wanted fun, but how should they get it?

Pleasure is really a by-product of play. It does not account for the play attitude, neither does it explain the direction which the play instinct will take. Children start to make something or to do something and expect to have a good time in doing it. Naturally, if they do not enjoy the activity they begin something else.

The pleasure in play is so much of a by-product that frequently children do not know whether they are having a good time or not. They are so absorbed in the activity that they have ceased to be aware that time is passing or that they are enjoying themselves. After the whole thing is ended they become conscious of the fun which they have had in what they were doing.

The environment, of course, is very important in the games which are played. We said a moment ago that an investigation carried on in New York City showed that the children who were observed did not know what to play. They just wanted to do something and, after play was proposed, they stood around waiting for some ingenious, inventive associate to tell them what to do. This is one of the reasons for supervised play among children. Supervision in games, however, is a very delicate psychological matter. It is of the greatest importance that the supervision be administered unobtrusively lest the children discover that they are being guided.

Edward Everett Hale, in his *Story of a New England Boyhood,* says that, in his early teens, he and his playmates thought that they were making and carrying out their own plans but as he looks back from mature years he sees quite clearly that they were carrying out the plans of his mother. The arrangements, however, were so subtly made and the management was so skillful that neither he nor his associates were conscious of the directive influence behind the scenes. The ability to do this reveals great educational power—perhaps the greatest that one can have. It is seen in Boy Scout activities, and in all social settlement work with children.

The use of this psychological factor in training and educating the young requires knowledge of the interests of the various periods of childhood. It is well known that early childhood is the time when children want to explore. They are curious about everything. Many of the questions which they ask cannot be answered by parents unless they "look them up." This makes trouble and is annoying. Consequently, parents are inclined to repress the curiosity of the child; and, as a result, children settle down into the home and school monotony, passively acquiescing in being bored until they can find some outlet for their activities which will satisfy the craving for sensations and adventures. But this longing might have been easily gratified had the parents understood the instinctive desires and appreciated the educational possibilities.

Children do not care to exert themselves when they do not see good reason for the effort. They always want dividends on their muscular and mental outlay. If adults will reflect a moment they will perhaps discover that, in this respect, children do not differ greatly from themselves. The desire for results is natural and significant. It should, therefore, be taken into account in organizing the work and play of children from ten years of age on.

Group games, as we have said, are now demanded. The difference between the kinds of games of young children and those of early adolescence is that the display of individual prowess now yields to the desire for the success of the side on which the boy is playing. Adolescence is the age of teams. Loyalty to the gang characterizes this period, and the team is only one phase of the gang.

During early childhood there is little or no subordination to a leader. Each one wants to boss the little herd. But now, at ten or thereabouts, all of this is changed. Leaders are selected and teams are chosen. The boy now begins to obey the leader and the development of the will enters upon a new phase.

The notion that drudgery has educational value was a product of the defense factory of teachers and parents. This idea was invented to save adults from thinking, and to offer an excuse for incompetency. If drudgery has educational value, no effort to make work either interesting or worth while is necessary. To make studies an exciting adventure for boys and girls requires intelligent organization. No one wishes to go to this effort if it is not necessary. Consequently, the defense mechanism of parents and teachers came to their aid and proved that drudgery has a mysterious value in education.

If parents would study the lives of successful artists, musicians, lawyers, physicians, scientists and writers, they would discover that the attitude toward their work was the attitude of play. These men found their work so absorbing that it was difficult to stop long enough to get the needed rest and recreation.

For children, drudgery is an occupation with no immediately satisfying motive. They do not see the use of what they are doing and, consequently, do not enjoy it.

When one reads about the crimes of boys to-day, one is impressed with the fact that in many cases the drudgery to which they were subjected in the home and school was the immediate cause. When boys of "good families" engage in crime, it is probable that they are trying to escape from the monotony of their life. Many times this longing is expressed in their efforts to get a "thrill."

Those who have given their attention to it find no diffi culty in making work at home and in the school so interesting that the children will have no desire to shirk it. The usual difficulty in accomplishing this is that after a period of inertia parents suddenly awaken to the fact that their children are loafing, that they are spending their nights in joy rides, and that study is relegated to moments which never come.

A recent study of the relation of play to intelligence has shown that with the increase of mental age there is the tendency for children to engage in fewer sportive activities. These boys and girls are less social and, consequently, social play and games do not appeal to them. This is certainly an undesirable condition which should be taken account of in education.

Dull and retarded children, on the other hand, were found to have unusual interest in all games and especially in those in which others participate. The retarded child, however, was found to avoid certain individual activities, especially those which were in any way connected with the studies in which these children were weak.

The same investigation indicated that gifted children may have versatility and interest in plays and games. These superior children, however, were found to be more individual in these activities. The social games seem not to appeal to them so much.

If a child does not get along well with other children, if he is found to be unpopular with his associates, effort should be made to ascertain the cause. It is a well-known fact that psychopathic children do not play contentedly with other children. They prefer to play and work alone. They are more seclusive in their disposition. Play thus becomes one of the means by which the intelligent observer can learn something about the peculiarity of the minds of children. The way in which they get along with associates is a sort of index of characteristics that are now giving their first evidence, and which must be understood and intelligently handled that they may not become definitely pathological later.

It is a common thing to-day, of course, for play to be supervised. It is usually a regular part of the school program, and cities arrange for supervised games during the summer. This supervision requires an unusual knowledge of the psychology of boys and girls. Games that are forced upon the children arouse internal if not visible opposition. They can rarely be made educational. Here, as in pupil government, the supervisor should be the power behind the throne rather than the conspicuous director of the activities of the children. The initiative should come from the children rather than from the adult.

This statement with regard to the initiative coming from the children is one of the basic principles of the psychology of childhood. Ostentatious control is always felt to be oppressive. One has only to look back over the early history of our country to see the truth of this. Our Colonial forefathers were irritated by the continuously visible authority of the English Crown. The requirements which were put upon the colonists were not particularly oppressive, but the control from across the sea was always conspicuous.

If adults are irritated by a control that is obvious, even if it is not oppressive, why should they expect children to be any less so? If adults would only observe their own reactions under different conditions they would discover that they have much the same feeling that children have toward an authority which gives them no opportunity for what is rather vaguely called self-expression. Hyde Park in London where a man can stand on a box and say anything that he wants to say without danger of arrest, where he can gather a crowd and even denounce the King of England without fear of molestation has probably saved England from many riots if not from something worse. Is this freedom unrelated to release from constraint in play?

Freedom to do what one wants to do in unostentatiously directed sport activities has marvelous educational possibilities. In another chapter we have shown that initiative does not develop in children unless the conditions are favorable. And play rightly directed is one of the best means of creating initiative.

We have found, then, that the tendency to play is instinctive in children and that if it is not given an outlet the youngsters will find for themselves adventures which are likely to be socially destructive.

We have also learned that play has immense educational possibilities. When it is directed with knowledge of the psychology of children, it becomes a means of developing them socially and ethically.

Further we have endeavored to show that the distinction between work and play consists rather in the attitude toward what the children are doing than in the nature of the activities themselves. The play spirit reveals itself in the enjoyment of what the child does, regardless of whether he is engaged in digging a cave to hide from outlaws or whether he is following his curiosity by investigating some question of physics, chemistry or history.

Finally we have seen that adults invented the idea that drudgery is necessary for the development of children in order to save themselves from the effort that is needed to make the work which they expect children to do interesting. It is a smoke screen which parents and teachers have sent up in order to hide their own failures.

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CHAPTER VII

MORAL EDUCATION

MORAL training is one of the most difficult problems in child psychology because of the great variation in individuals. A method that succeeds with one child fails with another. Why? It is a common experience of the writer when teaching students, to be told of a boy or girl adopted by one of the "best families" who has turned out badly. The answer to this is that there is no single "best environment." Too much depends upon the individual characteristics of children to make any single method of training good for each one. Parents will realize this if they stop to reflect for a moment. One of their boys responds at once to advice, but the brother resists all attempts to get into intimate contact with him.

A much distressed mother came to see the writer a few days ago with exactly this story. She has three boys, one of whom, as she put it, she has been wholly unable to get hold of. What should she do? One statement may be made as a pretty general rule. We have given it elsewhere but it should be frequently repeated. "Preaching" does not produce the desired results. It easily takes the form of nagging, a characteristic which becomes habitual in so many families that parents should be continually on their guard against it.

Children, again, do not like to have unfavorable comparisons made. To hear frequently that Johnny Smith does this and does not do that does not produce the desired behavior in Tommy Jones. He gets tired of hearing about Johnny Smith. Perhaps this objection to unfavorable comparisons is more characteristic of boys than of girls. Girls, in general, are more amenable to social demands than boys. The latter rather pride themselves on being superior to social requirements. This is one of the masculine characteristics during the early adolescent period.

It is an old and trite statement that actions are more effective than words. The very triteness of this maxim causes us to overlook its significance. The behavior of parents has a powerful influence on their children. If boys live in a home atmosphere that indicates lack of respect for law and order, they are certain to take the same attitude regarding matters concerning which their parents do not wish the application to be made.

We cannot expect boys and girls to make nice distinctions in the selection of the laws which they will obey or disobey. The requirement in earlier days that escaped slaves be returned to their masters dealt with a moral principle of a wholly different nature from violation of the personal liberty involved in some of the present objectionable laws. Violation of the Dred Scott decision trained boys and girls to stand for a vital human principle. Probably the home atmosphere of parents who aided in the underground transportation of slaves was an education in morality, but it is an extremely hazardous risk for adults to flout their contempt for laws—even bad ones—before the emancipated youths of to-day.

"Personal liberty" is so vague a term that boys and girls cannot be blamed if they apply it to their own case and insist that the home and school requirements are so much of an interference with their personal liberty that they have a right to make their own decision. When no reason for ignoring the law is given, the matter is not bettered for the youngsters. It is then just a case of deciding for oneself. Why should they not do the same?

Reasonable interpretation of a principle is always difficult, especially when the application concerns one's own enjoyment. If boys, observing that their parents decide what laws they shall obey, follow, more or less unconsciously, their example, we need not be surprised. This is "self-expression," "self-determination," and the right to direct one's own life about which we hear so much to-day.

Moral behavior has been defined as the choice of actions for the good of the group. If this choice is to be intelligently made it must be based upon knowledge; but we can hardly expect even a fair amount of knowledge until early adolescence is reached. Up to that time the moral training must be largely a matter of growth in habits with an occasional well-pointed remark that will give meaning to the habit which the mother, father, or teacher is trying to establish in the child. This, the writer believes, is the only effective way of training in moral conduct. Ethical conduct in the home, as a continual example before the children, pointed from time to time by observations which tend to establish moral principles of behavior, is then, as we have indicated, the first essential.

Examples of violation of laws, however much we may disapprove of the legal requirements, are not conducive to the appreciation by the young of ethical conduct. This fact is so important that it is worth a somewhat longer discussion.

The present writer has always been of the opinion that teachers should conform to the rules and regulations which are laid down for their pupils. Children cannot be expected to believe in the importance of punctuality, for instance, if the teacher himself is not punctual. There is a strong human tendency to resent requirements which those in authority do not themselves obey.

We have said elsewhere that children will not acquire good reading habits if reading is not a characteristic of the home. It is the belief of the writer that this principle has no exceptions in child training. Any one resents being selected for requirements which others violate with impunity. It is not clear, at least not to children, that one set of demands applies to the immature and another to their elders. Least of all is this clear in the present age of "self-expression" and the "challenge of youth." Children very naturally ask themselves why they should be forbidden to do what their parents do and, in the opinion of the present writer, this question can be answered only in one way, namely, older persons not having any one in immediate control of them "can get away with it." Why then should not young adolescents make "putting it across" the basis of their moral behavior?

Habit, established both by example and precept, is the beginning of moral behavior in children. As they grow somewhat older, more emphasis should be put upon personal choice. The feeling of responsibility toward society is a matter of gradual growth. Very young children, of course, do not have it. The young adolescent will not have it except as he has acquired the attitude by the kind of behavior which he has found to be approved by his parents and by others for whose opinion he has a high regard. The responsibility of high school boys and girls, to a very large extent, is limited to their associates. The gang is a tremendously important factor here. Even college students do not show a feeling of responsibility toward the college community as a whole.

Last year a few students in one of the large universities inserted a paid notice in the city papers announcing the death of the Superintendent of Grounds who was still very much alive. The chief motive for this act was what boys call fun. No thought was given to the consequences to the friends and relatives of the man whose death was announced.

We are not concerned here primarily with the conduct of the students involved. The illustration is given for quite another purpose. None of the students was willing to report those who committed the despicable act though many knew who they were. This is an immensely important fact in the study of moral growth. The spirit of the gang was operating among young men who ranged from eighteen to twenty-two or older. There was no feeling of responsibility to the entire university community. The responsibility which individual students felt was towards a very small group to which few of them belonged, and with which a very large number had no sympathy. But the law of the gang ruled, and that law is: Do not "squeal."

Now at a certain age the laws of the gang are to be expected in boys and girls. These laws are not only natural, but a boy who does not observe them is not developing according to the rules of growth. Judge Lindsey was quite right when he went to jail for contempt of court because he refused to violate the ethics of the gang. The boys of whom he had charge had told him their secrets as they confided in one another. They regarded him as one of the gang and, having received their confidence, he had no moral right to betray it.

During this gang period, however, there should be continual effort to induce boys and girls to take a larger view of their social responsibilities. They should not be compelled to betray the secrets of their gang, but they should be made from time to time to think of their individual responsibility toward the larger community which we call society. Even during the gang period the matter at issue may be of so great importance that the question can be raised with them whether or not they should betray their associates.

Stealing by members of the gang is an illustration in point. Earnest parents, trying to develop a social attitude toward morality in their boys might, under these circumstances, well raise the question with them of the ethics of betrayal. The question would be somewhat of this sort: "Do you not owe something to those who are not in your gang?"

The training in ethics and morality, as we have seen, varies at different ages. During the earliest period, before six years of age, let us say, the training is of a habitual sort. Imitation plays an important part. We must not forget that generalizations regarding right and wrong are slowly acquired from what these young children hear and see. There are no innate ideas of morality. The thing to do is what the environment of the child leads him to think is right or wrong.

During this period "conscience" is born, and conscience is the personal reaction to the customs and standards of behavior of those around the child. That action is right which brings approval of those whom children esteem. But, as we have said, words of adults which are in conflict with their behavior, if they have any effect at all, only confuse the child.

The misdemeanors of children at this age are natural, and they should not be overwhelmed with admonitions about their sins. They do not sin, since they do not know what sin is.

The tendency to cruelty at this period should be met by asking the children whether they would like to be treated in that way themselves. Selfishness also may be overcome by the precept of a "square deal," joined with the query whether they themselves are playing the game "on the square." The golden rule should be restated in terms which have a meaning for youngsters. Children of all ages have their own ways of stating the behavior toward others of which they approve.

From six or seven to about ten is a sort of intermediate period in the development of a child. He is gradually growing out of his individualistic tendencies but has not yet acquired the code of ethics which characterizes the period of early adolescence. During these years, boys and girls are subjected to an increasing diversity of influences. Their environment is now broadened. They are attending school and they hear statements from their associates which are in conflict with what they have learned at home. Parents should be aware of the ideas which their children are getting in this larger environment. Their "rights" may be interfered with. It may be necessary for them to defend themselves if they are to stand on their own feet. While we do not approve of fighting as a general principle, there are occasions when a boy who will not fight is in danger of becoming a weakling. Many a boy's consciousness of his ability has burst upon him suddenly after he has thrashed a bigger playmate in his school who had been bullying him beyond the endurance of a normal boy.

The writer recalls hearing a teacher say, some years ago, that for the first time she had hopes of a certain boy who had been almost too obedient and forbearing. "Damn you," the boy had exclaimed when a bully slapped him, and thereupon he proceeded to pommel his adversary. This may shock some who have mistaken notions about the training of children but, in the opinion of the writer, there is a point beyond which forbearance cannot go if the child is to develop into a man or woman of red blood.

Children, at this age, are learning to give and take. They are acquiring ideas of justice, fair play and bravery. Keen for their own rights and pleasures, they are also learning what belongs to others, and they are making the discovery that their own actions are being scrutinized and judged by their playmates just as they are estimating the behavior of others.

Cheating, greediness, and selfishness, children will not stand when they are at their play but parents too often acquire the habit of assuming that their own children are always right. In this way they strengthen the tendency which boys and girls have on entering school to regard their own desires and pleasures as of first importance. Thus, at the start personalities are deformed.

Even when the effort has been made to eradicate selfishness in the child before entering school, he, nevertheless, comes up against so many and such complex situations in which his wishes are opposed that the personal element is likely to dominate. Then, when he tells at home the story of his treatment, the sympathetic mother and individualistic father are too much inclined to support him in his selfish aggression.

In the first years of school, children are surrounded by a moral code regarding teasing, lying, and talebearing which may be quite different from the teaching of the home. The dangers here are great. A child may acquire a domineering, bluffing attitude or he may get what is popularly known as the inferiority complex. In the latter case the boy or girl is likely to adopt one of various methods of self-defense and self-excuse. Feeling his own incompetence, he may take to lying both in the school and in the home, as a means of self-defense.

We want to train children who have confidence in themselves, yet are not conceited. Confidence is essential to individual initiative and finally to success.

It is important, again, that children reach the early adolescent period with certain ideals firmly established as habits of thought. These ideals will concern their relation to one another. They will be the foundation of a reasonably intelligent judgment on subordinating their own personal desires to the wishes of the community, and on firmness in matters of principle. The judgment of what principles are worth fighting for will come chiefly from previous training. "Intelligence" alone is not a sufficient guide.

Very recently we have had several exhibitions in the daily press of young men of unusual ability who wished to commit the "perfect crime." Conceit probably played an important rôle in these cases, but habits of social responsibility had clearly not been fixed in their minds. Some of them had been brought up by nurses. Each of them had been petted at home. They had come to think that their superior ability guaranteed them against social requirements. It is well known that adolescents, especially boys, easily get the notion that their superior intelligence places them above what they are pleased to call social repression. This same fact has been observed in lads of unusual ability who went only far enough to undertake an imperfect crime. Some of these have violated merely the conventional code of morals, others have blundered into crime, while still others have relied so exclusively upon their innate ability that they have never accomplished anything, either good or bad.

Up to the age of eleven or twelve, the ethical social attitude of which we have been speaking should be imparted more or less indirectly. Examples given by parents, we have said, are of immense importance. Next come the opinions heard in the home regarding the conduct of men and women of national or local prominence. Biographies, also, take a prominent place in this indirect teaching of ethics and morality. Young boys and girls are always interested in biographies suited to their age. There are tales of adventures in the early history of our country—stories of men who endured hardships in their struggle to attain the ends for which they were striving. At times some of the actions of these men deserve condemnation. The treatment of natives by early explorers provides examples of what we mean. But, in general, they were red-blooded, honest men worthy of imitation.

These are the indirect methods of teaching ethics and morality. They establish principles of behavior without arousing the antagonism of the youngsters, which is so likely to be created by what is conventionally known as "talking."

With the advent of adolescence, greater difficulties arise. Boys and girls are now beginning to feel their importance. They are learning their power. They want to express themselves. They have passed what they regard as the age of childhood. They now learn that their associates have a freedom which they have not had, and restraint is irksome. This is the gang age of which we speak elsewhere. It is the period when both boys and girls are more secretive. If their parents have not developed a spirit of fellowship, if they have not made their children feel that they are interested in all of their activities, young adolescents are not inclined to take their parents into their confidence. The gang with its actions and its code of ethics is likely at this time to compete with the influence of the home and school.

The following quotation is from a recent letter of a prominent juvenile court judge in one of the eastern states:

"Within recent years, especially within the last year, there has been a so-called wave of juvenile crime throughout this country. A large part of this is by boys between fourteen and eighteen. A big item of their particular offences consists in taking automobiles. A great majority of these boys are Sunday school, and high school boys, and boys who are working after having had some Sunday school, church, and high school training. . . . After what is called a 'joy ride' they will leave the automobile in some remote spot in or near the city to be recovered by the police. Often they take girls with them, young girls, and they indulge in familiarities which, under ordinary circumstances, the girls would not permit. It is very seldom that a boy from a poor home is found indulging in this sort of lawless sport.

"I recently made a special examination of a group of such boys and girls. In one group one in every four was not only a regular attendant at Sunday school and church, and high school or some other school, but bore the best kind of reputation in home, school, and church. How do you account for them? Why is it that the lessons in home, school, and church have not done more to prevent lawlessness of this kind?"

How would you answer these questions? The extensive experience of this juvenile court judge gives them an importance which cannot be ignored.

Assuming that self-control has, to a certain extent, become a matter of habit and that the parents are interested in helping their children to have a good time as well as in assisting them with the more serious problems of work in the home and school, the age has now been reached when the youngsters should be taken into more definite consultation regarding their behavior. Presumably, in their sex instruction, they have been taught to protect girls from those less thoughtful and considerate than themselves. They have learned that defense of the weaker, whether boy or girl, is manly and that the aggressive use of superior strength is cowardly.

They have also learned, if they have been well trained, that the way in which they would wish to be treated is the way in which they should behave toward others. They have formed the habit of consulting their parents because they have found that their parents are interested in everything which they are doing. They have likewise learned that they must sometimes refrain from doing what they would enjoy, and do what, for the moment, they would prefer not to do. Now the time has arrived when the discussion of their actions should be based on the social attitude toward behavior. They now regard themselves as young men and young women, even though they are still very youthful adolescents.

But beneath this apparent confidence, perplexities and doubts may be discovered by one accustomed to read the signs of what is going on below the surface. The self-assertion of the early teens is, in part, an effort to conceal the uncertainty of which those just entering man's estate are only vaguely conscious.

During the earlier period, the boy and girl felt comfortably adjusted to their environment. They had no scruples about being children. But as adolescence dawns this feeling of contentment with childhood's ways and treatment disappears. A new era is suddenly opened, the full significance of which the young adolescent does not understand.

The explosive suddenness with which this change appears makes the early teens a particularly dangerous period. The youthful adolescent feels that he must break completely with childhood's thoughts and actions, as evidence that he is now grown up.

The ethical and moral teaching to which the child has responded is now in peril. Excesses are to be expected. Enthusiasms are rampant. But enthusiasm for what? That is where the danger lies.

This is the period of intense religious feeling followed frequently by conversion. It is also the age of skepticism. Youth must know why. He is not satisfied with dogmatic statements. Yet, intimately associated with this demand for reasons and arguments run the emotions. The young adolescent will reform the world. He will fight for fame. The easy life is not for him. Something to strive for he must have. What that something will be will depend upon the reading which he has done and is doing, upon the associates whose behavior he emulates, and upon the ideas and ideals which he is absorbing in the home and school. The earlier years have been the period of habit formation, of acceptance of opinions unconsciously. That was before he achieved his independence. Now he will have no more of it. He will work out his own salvation.

He is hilarious, persistent for brief periods, open to new views, ready for fads, anxious to do and win; but what he will do depends on the suggestions in which he is immersed. In contrast with previous years, when ethical behavior was accepted without emotion, this is the period of intense feeling. Examples of right conduct must include action. They should be exciting, like the stories of explorers; filled with intense feeling, as are the tales of early colonial days, the struggles and hardships of the abolitionists, and the contests for some principle which have been waged through the centuries. And through all this should run the thread of an ethical purpose for which these contestants strove. Morality, as we have said before, is best taught indirectly, with opportunity to carry through in vigorous action the precepts which are being taught.

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CHAPTER VIII

SOCIAL EDUCATION

DIVIDING a child's life into segments is always a tempting danger. But the emphasis thus placed on one division may seem to undervalue the others. The intellectual side, for example, may be overemphasized. Yet one may know much and do little. Or, again, one may be unable to make an adequate social adjustment. Failures for this reason are frequent. These people come dangerously near the narrow strip of "no-man's land" that separates the "normal" from the pathological. The human being is an intricately complex organism.

We know comparatively little about the underlying causes of human personality. To be sure, we have learned that the emotions play a leading rôle in the human drama. Many discoveries also have been made about the causes of emotional defects which in later life seriously handicap those who are thus afflicted. Psychiatric and habit clinics have yielded an immense amount of valuable information about the way in which emotional disturbances arise and become diseased reaction-habits. This information gathered by psychiatrists and psychologists, however, has not, to any large extent, reached the home or school. Psychiatric clinics for parents ought to be established, and teachers should be frequent visitors.

With this warning that the social training of children is only one phase rather than a segment of child development, it is our purpose to try to show its significance in the rearing of children. Unfortunately, it has not received the attention which it deserves. Its various ingredients, so to speak, are usually discussed under imitation, play, and the like. Various writers have talked about the "instinct of gregariousness" as though it were the same in children as in the lower animals; and it is true, of course, that children, like animals, herd together.

Other qualities, however, have appeared in human beings which totally change the psychical if not the biological meaning of gregariousness. Some of these qualities are good and others bad. Ambition and rivalry, when not carried too far, are not undesirable. Jealousy, emulation, and resentment are also among the human qualities of which we are thinking, and which do not arise in isolation. Some of these tendencies, to be sure, are found among the lower animals, but only anthropomorphism of the crudest sort identifies them with the same tendencies in children. At the human level, for better or worse, they have greatly increased in complexity.

We have said that the human personality is a complex unity whose different factors are separately discussed only for purposes of convenience. Every physical and psychological element contributes to the whole, and in the final product there can be no division.

If we try to state the most effective contribution of social education for children, it would probably be the training which is received from one's associates. Jealousy and selfishness, beyond a certain point, at least, ostracize a boy or girl. In the home these undesirable qualities are ignored when not, as often is the case, encouraged.

The writer is rather of the opinion that, if it were necessary to choose between the training of the great majority of homes and that of the playground, the latter would be preferred. It is unfortunate that uninformed parents too often do their best to spoil the good effects of the training which their boys and girls are getting from their associates. They sympathize with their offspring and help to fix the impression that they are being abused when in reality they are only being socially educated. On the playground, boys have the primitive man knocked out of them, and girls, if treated less severely, are still likely to discover that petty jealousies and selfish arrogance are not "in style." But the boy and girl, after giving to their parents their perverted version of the trouble, are likely to receive the support which starts or fixes emotional reactions that undo the good work of the rigorous playground treatment. The desire to justify oneself to oneself, and the tendency of parents to accept the defense without adequate knowledge of the facts, are conspicuous human traits.

It should be remembered that children finally grow up and go out into the world where they will not be coddled. They will be compelled to deal with others on the basis of equality. To be sure, they should be taught to stand for their rights but the question, "What are my rights?" is a serious one and should be decided in every instance by the merits of the question. Parents, too frequently, train their children to be failures by giving them mistaken notions of their rights and privileges in a world in which they are only individuals among many who have as much claim to "liberty and pursuit of happiness," as mother's boy or girl will have.

An uncontrolled or thoughtlessly directed home environment produces abnormal emotional reactions to conditions and situations. This illustrates, again, what has been called the conditioned response. A stimulus quite inert and wholly inadequate to produce a given reaction may be made to act as an effective substitute stimulus in place of the normally adequate one. All that is needed is to associate the indifferent stimulus a sufficient number of times with the one which normally produces the desired result. It will be seen from this that all manner of abnormal social reactions may readily follow stimuli with which they have no necessary connection.

A boy of twelve was recently brought to the writer by his mother who was greatly troubled because of the "abuse" that he was receiving on the playground. "The other boys are always 'picking on' him," she said. "They won't play with him and they seem to take delight in hiding his cap."

The boy was taken into another room that he might not hear the conversation with his mother. Then it needed but a few moments to get the following facts. It was only necessary to let the mother ramble on in her desultory mental meanderings.

The father was a busy man who gave little attention to his son except to scold him. He had told him to stand up for his "rights" but had never made clear to him what his rights were. The boy got what he wanted from his mother because, if his wish was not immediately granted, he left home and joined one or two others who also were unable to make a satisfactory social adjustment. On a few occasions they had "appropriated" an automobile for a joy ride. It was clearly a case of defense behavior. None of these boys was "appreciated" on the playground as at home. Their right of "self-expression" was outraged. Consequently, since each was abused, they found satisfaction in the company of one another. Estimated at a low value by other boys, they gave each other the desired sympathy and appreciation.

All of these boys come from "good families," and the intelligence quotient of the one brought to the writer was 110, yet he was one grade behind his age.

When the lad was recalled to the room where his mother was, he was sullen and resentful. Some little time was required before a play of humorous raillery brought a smile. Then his behavior was put to him as a game. He was told that he couldn't get along with his schoolmates. It wasn't in him. He didn't have the "stuff." He was too selfish and stubborn.

The boy replied with heat that he could if he tried. Oh, no, he could not do it. Finally, a wager was made—an ice cream soda to be paid by the loser at the end of a month; and so it was left until, at the appointed time, the boy returned to claim his bet. The sullen look was gone. He appeared happy and contented.

The real trouble, of course, was the father and mother, joined with the failure of the teacher to understand the boy. To the mother the "riot act" was read in private, and she promised to "do better," but here the story ends, for the writer has not heard whether they "lived happily ever after."

The success of the treatment in this particular case brings to mind a story that Montaigne tells about his own childhood. At nine, or thereabouts, he was noticeable chiefly for his good humor and laziness.

"The danger," says Montaigne himself, "was not that I would ever do any harm; it was rather that I would do nothing at all."

He evaded books as though they were infected with some disease which, at all hazard, he must escape. But a sly old Scot, George Buchanan, a poet, with almost uncanny understanding of young Montaigne's personality, one day took a copy of Ovid's *Metamorphosis* from the shelf, glanced through it lovingly, then turning to the boy said: "Don't you ever dare stick your nose into this book, it's far beyond your comprehension." Then, returning the book to its place, he left the room. Scarcely was he gone when the lad fairly leaped for it. No one should forbid him to read a book. No one should dare to say that he could not understand it.

Another case, taken from the author's notes, is a girl of fifteen. She was sent to the public schools because, in theory, her parents were democratic. But children have a remarkably keen "sixth sense," and many things happened in the home to make this girl feel that the material of which she and her family were made was of a better quality than that which went into many of her schoolmates. The social friends of her family, possession of a high-priced automobile driven by the family chauffeur, are conspicuous illustrations. The writer is not criticizing. He is merely stating two or three things which made this child highly appreciative of herself. The social events in her home were expensive and this girl's clothes cost much more than those of her schoolmates. Her mother was also over-solicitous about her companions. If the reader does not believe that one can be too particular and watchful about the associates of one's child let us say that these parents made their anxiety a little too evident and, curiously enough for a democratic family, the selection of companions for their daughter coincided rather noticeably with wealth and social position.

But why continue? Every one knows such families, and the daughters in them usually have a distinct stamp: superiority clearly evident, social condescension to associates whose parents have less money, irritation at restraint by teachers, and expectation of special consideration from those whom they deign to honor with their friendship.

At all events, that was true of this child who finally demanded that her parents send her to a select school peopled by children and teachers of a more discriminative judgment. At fifteen the girl was already socially disagreeable, and she was rapidly developing into an exacting, unstable, and useless social misfit.

Notice the conditions that existed: well-intentioned parents who believed so strongly in democratic associates that they would not send their daughter to a private school until her disagreeableness made life unbearable in the public schools. "But," said the mother when commenting upon the matter, "she is not happy in her new school. I made a mistake somewhere but I do not know exactly where." She wanted an answer to her query. Can you give it?

Conditioning social responses is a phase of habit formation. Like all habits, again, the conditioning is frequently produced by the environment without the knowledge of the parents, teacher, or children.

Emotions, originally aroused by one or two conditions, become attached to a large number of situations which have no connection with the one that first caused the response beyond the fact that they were associated together. Many social maladjustments thus arise.

Men and women may be self-willed and obstinate to a degree which makes them socially obnoxious because these reactions were established in the home by the conditioning process of which we have been speaking. They were unintentionally trained by their parents to be stubborn, peevish, selfish, or domineering. The situation in the home produces these reactions and the parents, unaware of the danger, make no effort to uncondition them.

Social training consists, to a large degree, in conditioning suitable responses and in unconditioning those which are established by the general environment. Parents, of course, cannot control the situations to which their children must react in the school and among their associates. They can, however, give thoughtful attention to the responses which are being fixed and then direct their efforts toward unconditioning those which are not desirable and to establishing in their place reactions which will be more adaptive and social.

As is well known, young children are inclined to outbursts of anger at toys and other inanimate objects. They fall over their wagon and wreak their vengeance on it as though it were to blame. Unwise methods are often taken to cure children of these outbreaks of temper. Sometimes they are punished, and their fear of the repetition of the penalty, instead of unconditioning the response to which they are inclined, may start equally dangerous reactions. Secrecy, deception, and withdrawal within oneself, leading to moods and "temperament," are illustrations.

Inhibition of this kind of emotional response by fear of the consequences does not produce that healthy emotional balance which makes for stability as the child grows into adolescence and beyond. Psychoanalysts have tried to monopolize this type of fear. They have given it a special name—"repression"—and they always interpret it according to their own doctrines. This is not the place to discuss Freudianism but human personality and the reactions which result from it cannot be expressed in any one formula.

It cannot be said too often that human nature, the mental unity which most individuals outside of asylums have and which is called personality, is intricately and amazingly complex. There are many reasons for the repression of a prohibited emotional response even when fear is given as the general cause. One may be afraid merely of the pain of physical punishment. Again the child may conceal the emotion not so much because of fear of pain as because of actual cowardice. Or again, he may wish to gain the approval of his parents, of his associates or his teacher. These are only a few of the possible reasons for the repression of an unsocial emotional exhibition.

Emotions repressed for whatever cause produce a condition of tension. This is true of any physical force, and, fundamentally, an emotion must be reduced to organic effects. Evidently, then, emotions should be expressed if the individual is to develop healthily. There are, however, undesirable emotions which should not be expressed. Consequently the question arises, how are we to harmonize these contradictions?

Let us restate the dilemma in a single sentence. Psychic and organic health requires that emotions have an outlet through which they can express themselves. Yet some emotions are undesirable and produce maladjustment. What, then, is the solution of this apparent discrepancy? The answer is to be found in substitute social reactions for the unsocial, and sometimes antisocial, responses which are more natural to children because they are native in the race. An illustration will make this clear.

We have referred at various times to the Boy Scout training because it exhibits a valuable psychological principle. Let us now give an illustration similar in principle but different in details.

Quite a number of years ago, Ernest Thompson Seton described an experience which he had in dealing with a bunch of young savages who were destroying the property of a man who had a large estate which he was cultivating because of the joy that he found in country life. His property included a large number of trees from which the boys of the vicinity had been accustomed to gather nuts.

Naturally, they looked upon his purchase and inclosure of the land as an infringement of their rights. The new owner, however, had no desire to restrict the privileges of the boys. He was not only willing but anxious to be their friend and to allow them all the opportunities which they had previously enjoyed. But he did not wish his property to be destroyed.

He had fenced his estate, which included many natural advantages in which boys always revel. In addition to the nut trees, it contained a beautiful lake surrounded by woods. On this lake the boys had been accustomed to paddle on rafts and in roughly made canoes. To express the situation somewhat colloquially, the boys were mad.

It was at this time that Mr. Seton visited his friend and learned of the troubles which he was having. Notwithstanding the fact that he had talked with the leaders of the gang and had told them that they could have all the nuts, apples, and fruit that they wanted if they would only come to him and ask permission, the farmer had not succeeded in making friends with them. They did not want to be compelled to ask the privilege of exercising "the right to liberty and the pursuit of happiness" which was born or trained in them. They had been robbed of their inalienable rights. Therefore, instead of asking permission, they used the "right of self-determination" and took what they wanted when they wanted it. They also showed their disapproval by drawing pictures and writing their displeasure on the white posts of the fence that enclosed their "personal property." They were acting out unguided boyish nature.

The farmer was badly upset and asked advice. Mr. Seton said that he would help him on one condition, namely, that he should be given a free hand with assurance of complete freedom of action. He visited the school which the boys attended and secured permission from the principal to address them. He gave one of those inimitable speeches for which Mr. Seton has become famous. He told the boys that he and his friend were going to have an Indian powwow. They were going to spend three days and nights in camp, enjoying themselves as the Indians used to do. Would the boys join them? They were all invited and everything would be free.

One of those impressive silences which teachers and public speakers sometimes face, followed. The boys looked glum. They did not propose to be taken in by any such trick, so Mr. Seton tried once more. His next appeal, however, was hardly more effective than the first. When he ended his vivid description of the camping party which was being planned—canoeing on the lake, sleeping in tents, hunting, fishing, and all the enjoyments of the wild—he asked one of the boys personally whether he would come. A gruff reply, an uncertain, half doubtful but partial assent was given. Mr. Seton left the building discouraged. He did not know whether he had succeeded or failed. Nevertheless, he decided to carry on in the hope that one or two other devices would weigh the scales in his favor.

The following day, a bright idea came to Mr. Seton. If he could only get one of the boys on to the grounds and let him see the tempting equipment for Indian sports, the information would at once be carried to the rest of the gang. Consequently, he planned to meet one of the members "accidentally," and to give him a note to carry to his friend, the farmer, on the grounds. The pay was generous for the errand and the boy, gladly pocketing the money, went to the place of the encampment. What he saw there made his eyes bulge. Real birch-bark canoes on the lake, Indian tepees ornamented in the best style of savages, baskets of apples and other fruit together with a huge pile of logs for a bonfire that would bring joy to the heart of any boy! All these things he saw, and many more. With eyes almost bursting from their sockets, he hurried back to his chums to tell them of the wonderful things that he had seen.

The day arrived, and it was as pleasant as though it had been made to order for the camping party. The boys had been invited for four o'clock. The hour arrived but not a boy appeared. Only silence greeted the hopes of Mr. Seton and his friend; four-fifteen, four-twenty, four-twenty-five, and still not a sound at the gate. Mr. Seton was discouraged. Was it possible after all that he had failed to understand boy psychology?

Finally at four-thirty, a yell as from the throats of a hundred savages was heard at the gate and fifty boys dashed into the grounds, rushed to the encampment place and gave their Indian yells. Now, Mr. Seton had not thought that the boys would extend the invitation to their uninvited friends. Provision had been made for about fifteen. All the help of the farm had to be called immediately to assist in gathering more fruit and getting other food to supply the uninvited guests.

The first thing that Mr. Seton did was, nothing. He let the boys shout and tear around until they were hoarse and weary enough to sit down. Then he gathered them around the enormous pile of logs and branches which were now lighted for the next act in the drama.

When they were quiet he began to tell his Indian stories, some of which are familiar to the readers of this book. The boys listened with rapt attention. Nothing was heard but silence. At the psychological moment, Mr. Seton suddenly stopped and said: "Now look here, fellows, how do you want to do this? Do you want to do it in any old way or do you want to do it as the Indians did?"

"Like the Indians," shouted the boys.

"All right," said Mr. Seton. "Then the first thing to do is to elect a chief."

The boys immediately proposed Mr. Seton himself for chief but he refused the honor, saying he was going to be the medicine man. They must elect their chief by popular vote and obey him.

The boy elected, as those acquainted with boy psychology know, was the leader of the gang which had been creating all of the disturbances and making the depredations. To use a colloquial expression, "he was the worst boy in the bunch."

It may be well to add, in passing, that the newly elected chief could whip any boy in the gang and had often proved it. Another fact, with which any teacher is quite familiar, is that he demanded obedience. He would not stand for violation of the rules of the game, and in this case "the game" was the rules which Indians followed. Boys were not allowed to decorate themselves with feathers until they had earned them. It was only the victors in the various sports who were permitted to ornament themselves with these insignia of distinction.

After the evening sports had ended and the fire had died down, the boys were so exhausted that they were ready to throw themselves upon the rough hemlock beds in the tepees and sleep the sleep that only tired boys can sleep. They were Indians and had had their powwow.

The next day was occupied with contests of various sorts in which the boys tried to earn the right to decorate themselves. There were foot races, spear throwing, arrow shooting, and canoe races, and between acts there was eating of the tempting viands which hurry-up orders had provided.

Three days passed, three glorious days for the boys. They had never had such a time, had never heard such stories as Mr. Seton told and, more important still perhaps, they had learned that Mr. Seton's friend was a better fellow than they had thought. So they took their two hosts into their gang and from that time on, as the old Sunday-school books used to say, "Every one was happy ever after."

To put it concretely, these boys became the protectors of the property of the farmer. They defended his rights against hoodlums from other towns who did not know that the property was under their protection. They gathered their nuts in season as the farmer had previously told them they might. They took them with the knowledge that they had permission, and they used the precaution that property owners would exercise in gathering the fruit of their land.

Remember that we are speaking of the socialization of the child. Our illustration shows the method of unconditioning some kinds of undesirable behavior. We have found that children have certain primitive tendencies which are likely to express themselves in unsocial or antisocial ways unless substitute reactions are established. The experience of Mr. Seton which we have just related shows how emotions may be redirected. To put this in present-day psychological language, the early emotional reactions were unconditioned and new responses were substituted. The boys were made social.

Our story is about boys, but leaders of girls' clubs know that the method with them is essentially the same. It is training children to face social realities by creating conditions which will make them want to meet them.

Psychoanalysts call these substitute reactions sublimations. By introducing this word they seem to have claimed a patent on the idea. It so happens, however, that the method is much older than psychoanalysis and was used many years before Freud by those who understood the psychology of childhood.

What is desired is to give the primitive tendencies free outlet in order that repression may not cause them to strike in and become fixed as sore spots in the personality of the growing boy and girl. This means, of course, that the stage should be set for actions which satisfy the call for adventure. This, Mr. Seton accomplished and the method, in general, is that which is followed in the training of Boy Scouts.

Socialization of children means a readaptation of social tendencies so that they will fit modern society. A clear perspective of social situations is needed, but a reasonable view of conditions demands experience which children have not had. Consequently, the method of social training should be to provide experiences out of which a social attitude will develop. These artificially created experiences also give opportunity at various times for casual observations and remarks which are much more effective than "preaching."

The time for advice is when youngsters are faced with a situation which appeals to them as worth while. Scouting is such a situation. It is immaterial that the scouting is purely artificial. It does not seem artificial to the boys or girls. They regard it as the "real thing."

Balanced emotional control is a social requirement, and this balance, when it is secured, is a product of the environment. Children want to be held under stern control provided the need of control appeals to them. They do not want to be coddled until they have experienced the luxurious ease and joy of being petted in the home.

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CHAPTER IX

PERSONALITIES IN THE MAKING

AT birth the child has been, in part, made, but to a large extent he consists of potentialities. The nerve patterns needed at the beginning of life have developed before birth. These patterns are the ones which must perform the reflex acts required to take food and to carry out the other movements which are necessary as soon as a child is born.

With this equipment an infant comes into the world. No sooner, however, has he arrived than he begins to react to the little world around him. His nervous system is so constructed that it can at once receive impressions from the outside world. This contact through the sense organs is, at first, vague and confused, but gradually the confusion is dissipated, and the reactions become more definite and purposeful.

The neural patterns for the first reactions are laid down in the nervous system previous to birth because these reactions must be performed at once in order that the infant may live. These patterns are the racial heritage bequeathed to all infants to start them out in the world. This much is given them outright.

But their inheritance does not end here. Besides that which they receive at birth, there is an additional bequest which, as it were, is left in trust for them. They can draw upon it in small amounts from time to time, but whether their checks continue to be honored will depend upon the way in which that which is placed at their disposal during their early years is used. The use made of what is given in infancy and childhood also determines whether the entire trust fund will finally be received or whether the account will be closed because the previous allowances have been wasted.

The child, you see, is on probation, but, unfortunately for him, this probation period is a time when he is too young and inexperienced to protect his interests. He is compelled to rely upon others, upon his parents first, and later upon them in collaboration with his teachers.

You have already guessed, of course, that this trust fund consists of potential nerve patterns upon which acquired reactions, habits—behavior—depend. If a child of civilized parents were to live from early infancy among the Bushmen of Africa, these acquired patterns would be of such a sort that adaptation to civilized life would be impossible.

But it is not necessary to put the child among primitive savages to deprive him of the mental deposit which has been left in trust for him. His claim on the entire amount placed to his credit will be recognized, as we have said, only in proportion to the wisdom shown in the expenditure of his yearly allowances. His personality is in the making.

What the child will do depends upon what the infant did, and what the adolescent does is determined by what was done in all of the earlier years. You see, it is a continuous, interrelated series. Each year depends upon those that have passed, until, finally, in early adolescence, the series ends. From that time on, responses to conditions are more or less of a composite, if not a replica, of the behavior of earlier years. They are definitely a replica when childish behavior is continued into later life.

The writer knows personally two young business men and one woman afflicted with this fixation of infantile responses. They are not cases of reversion because, though they have reached the age of maturity, they have always reacted in childish ways. The three are wholly dependent on their mother, and the two young business men broke their engagements to estimable young women because they "could not leave mother." They are treated like children in their homes, and they act like children everywhere. Vacillating, indecisive, they decide to take a course of action but, the next moment, they draw back, fearful of the consequences. Their personality is colorless. If one were to give it a color, yellow would be the name.

Will a young man or woman be able to cash in on the trust fund credited at birth? Not if he has not grown up mentally and emotionally. Personality is an exceedingly complex product. It is the result of the integration of all of the ingredients that unite in the making of an individual; and by no means the least of these is the emotions. They will determine to a large extent the use which will be made of one's mental equipment.

A child will do what conditions induce him to do, and throughout these early years behavior is starting and rapidly fixing nerve patterns. Personality, let us repeat, is in the making and before long it is finished. Then indulgent parents and short-sighted teachers wonder why a boy of good ability fails in law, medicine, or business, or why a young woman accepts neurasthenia as a method of escaping from the responsibilities which she is abundantly able, intellectually, to carry through to success.

An illustration has just been brought to the attention of the writer, of an attractive boy with good ability, in a wealthy family. He was, indeed, such a charming little youngster that his grandparents and parents combined to spoil him. There was no control. He was idolized, allowed to have what he wanted, including his own way. By the time a little brother arrived to receive a part of the misguided affection of the loving parents, this lad was already spoiled. He was allowed full freedom for self-expression and he certainly expressed himself.

What is the outcome? A young man of twenty without the slightest indication of social or moral responsibility. Thus far he has been saved from the penalties of his semicriminal acts by the standing and money of his parents. Checks to which he signed his father's name have been taken up and paid. So far as the writer knows, he has not yet signed the name of other men to get the money which he wants, but his family is in constant anxiety about what he will do next.

If his parents were not wealthy, this young man would be called a ne'er-do-well. As it is, he is just an ordinary loafer, never holding a job for any length of time. Yet he has ability. He was not spoiled by heredity. He was ruined by his training. He is dissatisfied with himself and with those about him.

When we said above that the behavior of the adolescent is the result of what was done during all of the earlier years, we were merely stating the obvious effect of adaptation to the conditions of the home and school. It is also a truism of psychology to-day that adaptation does not end with the observed responses. A permanent change occurs in the nervous system; and it is these changes which are called neural patterns. They are the basic cause of behavior, the immediate, but not the final, explanation of the maladjustments which later reveal themselves in the various devices for getting around objectionable situations instead of facing them squarely.

The childish way of dealing with unpleasant conditions—difficulties, refusals, school or home requirements—is to shun them. But they cannot be shunned as can "bad company," by leaving them and seeking better companions. That would merely postpone the evil day. In some way they must be circumvented, and to accomplish this psychological strategy is employed.

It must not be assumed, however, that the strategical device is always used consciously, that it is thought out and purposely employed to accomplish the desired end. The infant, hardly a week old, tries in its puny, but often successful, way to reconstruct the little nursery world. This is the first method used by children to escape from reality. If the device gets results in the nursery, it is continued as the infant grows into the creeping and toddling child.

Reflect for a moment upon the method that you would use if you wished to train a dog to whine for a desired tidbit instead of barking like a real dog. You would give him the choice morsel when he cried and refrain from doing so when he barked. In this way you would get the result that is usually obtained in the home.

The infant's reaction is as unthoughtful as the dog's. Each is trying in his crude, babyish way to get what he wants, and, in both cases, the future will be determined by the outcome. If the method brings results, it is continued. If it fails the dog tries another way. Sometimes the baby also does, but he is more likely to accept the situation and fall asleep. He is adapting himself to inexorable reality. A healthy personality is being formed.

As the child grows older, he may continue to use the crying, whining method of evading unpleasant situations, but some facts of reality are as unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. Consequently, other devices are resorted to that unyielding reality may be circumvented. Let us turn to an illustration.

A girl of fifteen had "epileptic fits." At least that was the diagnosis of the family physician and the parents. But an unusually discerning teacher who had studied mental hygiene had her doubts. The seizures were almost too consistent, and they were remarkably opportune. They saved the girl from much annoying work.

The teacher read what she could find on the subject and then she carried her doubts to a psychiatrist. From her story he thought it quite possible that the seizures were counterfeit. At any rate, it seemed best to act on that assumption, and so the teacher said to the girl, "You are too old now to have these fits. You will not have another." But she did, though the attack was somewhat delayed.

Some days later, when the girl again fell to the floor with the customary epileptic display, the teacher did not permit the usual excitement and sympathy. Instead of being tenderly removed to the rest room and, later, allowed to go home, she was left where she fell. "We will not interrupt the work," the teacher said, quite distinctly and in the hearing of the girl.

The children wondered at the indifference. Many thought it hard-hearted to let the poor girl lie on the floor, but very shortly she got up and went to her seat. To shorten a rather long story, the seizures were found to be a simulated psychosis adopted at first intentionally to win sympathy and to get what she wanted. This conditioned pathological behavior then became habitual, and prolonged psychological treatment was needed to produce a cure.

It is a mistake to assume that all efforts to escape from reality are caused by conflicts, conscious or unconscious. Conflicts, as this word is used to-day in psychological literature, are always between ideals, and they do not arise until a child is old enough to understand that certain actions are contrary to the social and moral conventions. Up to that time the "struggle to escape from reality" is merely an effort to make the child's world more to his liking. If one device fails, another is used. It is the trial and error method. It is also adaptation to the variable or unalterable requirements of the home and school. We should hasten to add, however, that this acceptance of reality is often more apparent than real. The charming little strategist may become a marvelously skillful prevaricator.

When the child is old enough to understand the social code, his efforts to compromise with reality are more evident. Some of these compromises begin quite early in the child's young life. How early depends upon one's definition of the word. But compromise is not synonymous with adaptation.

At first, the social code, if we may use so comprehensive a phrase for such a simple fact, is the requirements of the mother. A little later it includes the demands of the father, and then of the teachers and school associates. But one can hardly try, consciously or unconsciously, to make a compromise until one has some ideal with which to deal.

Without raising the question, however, whether a child compromises early or not, we will begin with his admission to the school, because here, if not before, he faces a clear and definite social code, namely, that of his teacher and schoolmates. Further, the child is now old enough to be affected, perhaps unconsciously, by the discordance between his actions and the accepted ideal.

Cowardice, to take one illustration, is strongly condemned. Consequently, the boy does not wish to admit that he is a coward. Therefore, when he tells the story of his "retreat" from the enemy, he says that the aggressor picked up a stone to throw at him, which was not true, or he uses some other subterfuge to explain why he did not stand his ground when attacked by a boy no larger than himself.

This excuse is also an attempt of the boy to persuade himself that he is not a coward. Meanwhile, as he repeats his story the actual facts of the encounter tend to be thrust back into the unconscious. If they are not actually forgotten, they are, at any rate, not recalled, for the moment the truth raises its head above the conscious level it is thrust back and covered, so to speak, with excuses.

A girl, again, unwilling to admit, even to herself, the greater charm of a rival, makes disparaging remarks about her. Later in life this attempt to raise oneself by pulling others down, to deny one's physical or mental inferiority, takes the form of gossip about a rival. The girl may, or may not, believe what she says. Belief is very easy when one wants to believe. To forget is also exceedingly convenient at times, especially when forgetting the truth advances one in the estimation of oneself and others. The defense mechanism plays us many tricks, and the unconscious is a great convenience when we prefer to forget.

Just a word about this much misused "subconscious" or "unconscious." It is not a special storehouse. The only intelligible meaning that "forgotten," unconscious, memories can have is the failure of one or more systems of nerves [1] to function. Naturally, if we can get other systems to act in opposition to those whose activity would bring unpleasant thoughts to mind, we inhibit the undesirable neural activity and, in time, merely by disuse, these groups of nerves cease to function. This is the explanation of repression. We do not "thrust unpleasant memories back into the unconscious" and then repress them. That is too much like putting them into a box and sitting on the lid. We inhibit the action of certain integrated groups of nerves by making others function. We know, for instance, that the best way to "forget" is to remember or think of something else.

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[1] We use the words "systems of nerves" for the benefit of the lay reader. The student of psychology will, of course, understand that we are referring to systems of neurones.

After the defense mechanism has continued long enough to misrepresent facts for the glorification or justification of the child or adult, vindication is complete. But do not forget that the adult justifies his failure with plausible reasons because he learned to do so when a child. The personality of the adult was finished long ago, and change is now impossible.

The boy or girl is confronted with a disagreeable situation which we may call, in the conventional language, reality. What shall be done? The developmental way, of course, would be to face it squarely. In childhood, this reality is a lesson to be studied when enticing pleasures call; or a situation may require unselfish action by a child who has been petted and indulged until he thinks that at his beck those about him should yield in homage. Yet no child will admit that he is selfish because the social code of his little world condemns it. So here, once more, all sorts of reasons are discovered—the child would not agree that they are invented—to justify his insistence that he be the "star" or she the "belle" among the actors.

The discovery of satisfying reasons for doing what one wants to do, is called rationalization. It is a subtle deceiver, a flatterer of vanity. By means of it one explains defeat; others were to blame; the lesson was too hard; the teacher was not fair; the other boy was bigger, or "I slipped and fell, and then he choked me; but I'll get him next time."

Rationalization acquired in childhood plays havoc with the thinking of adults. Spiritualism is believed, not because there is conclusive evidence but because one wants to believe it; and when a magician repeats whatever mediums do, as did Houdini, the defense mechanism of believers comes to their aid and they say that the magician is a medium, but does not know it. Rationalization is a marvelous aid to fuzzy thinking.

Children do things because they want to do them. Then, when parents or teachers object, or when their "better self" protests, they invent reasons which are so flimsy that they would ridicule them were they used by others.

If a child gets angry when the unreasonableness of his reasoning is exposed, you may be sure that he was rationalizing; for an emotional outburst is acknowledgment that he sees the weakness of his arguments. Anger is the last line of trenches behind which he retreats.

Were it necessary to prove the serious effect of allowing the habit of rationalizing to develop in children and to become a common reaction it would be needed only to say that rationalization is a distinctive characteristic of the insane. They have no ulterior motive, unless it be to prove their sanity, and in this they fail hopelessly. This defense is so much evidence of the disintegration of their personality.

Children, however, have an ulterior motive in the early stages of their rationalizing, and this motive is to escape rebuke, or perhaps punishment, for some misdemeanor. If the matter is not too serious, their excuse or justification is accepted and they soon learn that a lie is not always a lie.

A plain lie is punished, but a lie properly dressed up is just a mistake or "an error of judgment." Unfortunately, it is more than that. It is an error of the personality. It is one way in which the personality disintegrates even before the integration has been completed. It is the entrance to the path that ends in maladjustment.

We are not concerned here with maladjustment which has become pathological. Keeping children as nearly normal as psychological training may permit is our present theme.

The first efforts should be directed toward producing in children a reasonable balance between selfishness and altruism. The only will that young children have is to get what they want in any way in which they can get it. Unpleasant requirements of home or school—reality, as these conditions are called—are so many obstructions from which, in some way, they must escape.

Various ways are tried by the child to evade the objectionable demands which a "cruel" fate and exacting adults have thrust upon him. But these circumventions are not altogether satisfactory. He wishes to forget his failures and shortcomings, but is only partially successful. Inhibition does not always completely inhibit.

When, as is bound to happen, the unpleasant memories get the better of his wish to keep them out of mind, he urges his defense mechanism to harder work. But mental peace is coy. Invented arguments do not fully satisfy. He *must* forget, and so the mental apparatus for repression, or inhibition, is pushed to the limit with forced draft.

Meanwhile, conflicts arise. Some of them remain in the limbo of the unconscious; and when these thrust their heads above the level that separates the conscious from the unconscious, the child works his several kinds of defense apparatus all the harder. It is a struggle to fool a personality that is as yet not fully integrated, and which, consequently, cannot see through the blandishments of the clever cajolery of the defense.

The irritation that causes what two mothers, referring to their eighteen-year-old sons, called "brutal words" is the product of failure of the adolescent to be wholly at peace with himself. These angry outbursts are reflex attempts at self-defense. The youth is not satisfied with his sins of commission or omission, yet is unwilling squarely to face the situation. He knows, for example, that he is falling behind his class but, with the personality that his training has produced, he does not have the stamina to enter the lists and win. Meanwhile, he continues to rationalize, and to forget. But his inhibited memories grow, and he is not quite at peace, though he works hard to persuade himself that, when away from home and school, life is a happy joy ride.

What is the trouble? Must all adolescents try to convince themselves by rationalizing that their joyous life is the real article? If they are quite sure of themselves, why are they irritated when their defensive arguments are shot to pieces? Anger, let us repeat, is an admission of the weakness of one's position and of unwillingness to acknowledge defeat.

Remember what was said above: What the adolescent does is determined by what was done during earlier years. The personality is being formed from the start. The environment is the incentive for the formation of functional neural patterns, and the kind of patterns that are made will settle, perhaps for life, the sort of personality of the individual; and his personality will determine the amount of the credited trust fund that will be available.

The personality is by no means wholly a matter of intelligence. Many of good ability are wrecked by unbalanced emotions. A strong will is a habit of vigorous attack. A weak will is the habit of evading reality, of compromising, and then of explaining failure by excuses. The personality is the final product of all the factors, physical, mental, and emotional, that go to make up the individual.

Barring defectives, of whom we are not speaking, an unbalanced personality is the result of unbalanced emotions. A strong will is manufactured in the home and school out of the raw material deposited in trust for the child at birth. What kind of behavior patterns will he have? The facts indicate the method of training. With children of fair ability, the making of personality is in the hands of their trainers. Too frequently problem children are made problems by problem environments, by problem parents, and by problem teachers.

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CHAPTER X

FEAR

THE rather common belief that fears are inherited is erroneous. Until recently even psychologists thought that certain fears are racial, that they come down to us from our prehistoric ancestors for whose safety celestial phenomena, such as thunder and lightning, strong winds, and darkness, had terrible significance. In opposition to this view, however, certain facts have recently been discovered.

First of all we should refer, again, to the conditioned reflex so convincingly proved by Pavlov. The flow of gastric juice in the stomach of dogs, he found, could be produced by ringing a bell provided the bell had previously been rung a few times when the dogs were being fed. The significance of this remarkable discovery for the origin of certain so-called instincts, such as fear, was quickly seen and experiments have proved that fears can be produced in children and removed at will.

The second fact in opposition to "racial fears" was observed when infants too young to have had these fears conditioned in them were tested by laboratory methods. Such infants, for example, were found not to have the fear of fur which was supposed to have come down to us from our prehistoric if not from our animal ancestors.

Thirdly, it was not only found that these so-called racial fears could be produced at will but the further observation was made that they are the very ones that are most certain to be conditioned in children by mothers and nurses. It is in the darkness, for instance, that brothers and sisters, jump at young children. The "fear" is more easily conditioned at that time than in the light.

Something, however, must be inherited to produce a mental condition so favorable to the conditioning or creation of fears, and we should learn what this racial characteristic is before proceeding to the discussion of the prevention and elimination of these dreads and obsessions which always help to produce nervousness, and sometimes result in serious consequences.

From the earliest human beings of whom we have any knowledge to the present time, man has been awed by the strange, the new, and the unknown. This awe, however, does not mean fear. Whether or not fear will develop depends on the environment. Among primitive people reverence was often the reaction to these awesome objects or conditions. To be sure, fear can be analyzed out of reverence but it is not the chief characteristic. That is adoration and worship, at least this is true among primitive people.

Fear of the strange, the unknown, and therefore, dangerous, acquired during childhood may remain for a time unassociated with any definite object and, hence, produce a state of vague fear. This condition of vague anxiety, however, does not long continue unattached to specific objects. If there is nothing definite to which it can attach itself, the imagination creates something. Fear is the cornerstone of psychopathic diseases.

"Daddy, I am afraid," said a small boy to his father. "Afraid? Of what?" asked his father, but the boy did not know. Later, when grown to young manhood and a patient of Dr. Boris Sidis at his Psychopathic Institute, facts came to light which showed how fear had been conditioned many times in early childhood. The story is too long for inclusion in this brief discussion. Those who are interested will find many examples in Dr. Sidis' *Causation and Treatment of Psychopathic Diseases.* Here, it is sufficient to say that, as a child, he was afraid of the dark and that fear was conditioned in him by family dreads. His grandmother was afraid of railroad tracks and, on a visit to her, a hermit frightened him. It was snowing at the time and he remembered that a little child, about his age, had been lost in the snow and died. The grave had been shown to him. But this is enough of the story. It is, however, typical. Many psychopathic states owe their beginning to funerals to which a child was taken.

Now let us return to our baby. Of course, an infant is too young to have awe in the sense of adoration and reverence, but these attributes do not exhaust the possibilities of this mental state for very young children. Surprise and uncertainty, doubt about what to do, make an excellent foundation for fear. The latter state of mind, if not the former as well, means a big question mark for the right response or behavior. What the infant will do in the presence, for example, of a dog will depend, among other conditions, upon what the dog does. If it jumps at him and barks, he will be frightened. If, on the other hand, the dog goes quietly to him and licks his hand, the infant's behavior will probably depend upon what those nearby do. If the mother or nurse shouts, "Go away!" the child is likely to be frightened by the suddenness and loudness of the cry. But if the mother strokes the dog and says, soothingly, "Good doggie," the infant is almost certain to respond also with caresses.

Essentially the same statements may be made about fear of the dark. It is, of course, true that prehistoric man feared the dark. He was afraid to enter unknown dark caves, and he was anxious in the darkness of the night. This was because of wild animals and equally wild men. But it has been a long time since these wild creatures were a source of danger, and they are certainly not to be expected in the upstairs rooms.

As the infant gets a little older and becomes a "small boy," or "girl," awe in the presence of the unknown, strange object or condition takes a new form. The child is still uncertain what response to make, and its reaction continues to be dependent upon the accompanying factors in the environment; and among these factors, people—especially parents and teachers—hold the most commanding place. But curiosity now is also frequently a constituent of the awe. The reason why it is so seldom observed is that the mother or nurse usually conditions the child's behavior before curiosity has had time to appear.

A child of four was recently walking with his mother through country fields when a harmless snake squirmed across their path. "How do you suppose the snake runs without any legs and feet?" asked the mother. "Let's see," exclaimed the child as he ran valiantly after the snake to try to catch it.

After returning home, the mother brought the encyclopedia and explained to the boy the method of locomotion of the snake. The following day, the youngster came into the house with a dozen earthworms in his pocket and with the question in his mouth, "Are these little snakes?"

Whether curiosity or fear will characterize a child's behavior toward thunder and lightning, darkness and animals, is evidently determined by the associated factors in the environment, namely, by what psychologists call conditioning stimuli. Naturally, as the child becomes old enough to go to school and to associate with other children, the parents lose control of situations which can act as conditioning factors. With thoughtful parents, however, who think their children of sufficient importance to converse with them occasionally on their own childish level, the fears which have been produced come to the surface.

A boy of ten, for example, in conversation with his father suddenly exclaimed: "Must I die?" A short conversation revealed the cause of the question. His schoolmates, interested in the sickness of one of their associates, had bluntly exclaimed to him, "You've got to die." This statement had been worrying him for a week or more. The longer he thought of it the more troubled he became until, when his father discovered his state of mind, the fear had become fixed and was occupying the greater part of his waking thoughts.

The seriousness of childhood fears lies in their after effects. Children are sensitive to a degree almost incomprehensible to adults. One child was greatly frightened by seeing a waterfall. He was taken up steep steps to get a better view but what he got was a greater fright. In this case the fear had been conditioned by the expressed anxiety of his father on other occasions that the child might fall.

When one reads the literature of psychopathology, the impressive fact that stands out as though printed in capital letters is the number of cases of functional nervous diseases that started in childhood fears. Often the cause is well intended, but badly phrased, religious instruction.

"The dominant element in my religious instruction," says one patient, "was the doctrine of hell. To me everything else was insignificant in comparison with the terrible place to which I would go if I did wrong. Finally, I had nightmares which pictured the awful scenes of which I had been told. I saw the terrible faces of those suffering horrible agonies. Such a deep impression did the descriptions which I heard at revival meetings and at home make upon me that I regard it as the primary cause of my present nervous condition."

Again, talking about diseases in the presence of children is likely to create in them the fear that they may have one or another of them. It should not, however, be thought that the danger is avoided by denying the existence of disease. The denial itself emphasizes the possibility. Suggestion is a subtle force and the only way to avoid its influence is to say nothing about what we would prefer not to suggest. The influence of negative commands and instruction has long been known to be more powerful with young children than positive statements. A teacher, for example, who says, "I am going to tell you the truth about this, but first of all, I want to say that those who believe 'so and so' are mistaken," will usually find that the erroneous doctrine is remembered and the "truth" is forgotten.

If the statement that talking about diseases may have a serious psychopathic effect requires proof, we have the evidence in the case of a boy whose older brother had epileptic seizures. Growing up in the ever-present fear lest he also might develop the same malady, he finally became insane. The story is told in *A Mind That Found Itself*, by Clifford W. Beers, and the book is a tremendously powerful human document. It would hardly be possible to present a more impressive moving picture of the influence of fear. The older brother was stricken with what was thought to be epilepsy. After his death, the cause of his disorder was found to be a tumor, but this was not known when these two youngsters were children. Young Beers was terribly depressed with the belief that if his brother, who had enjoyed good health, was stricken so suddenly, he himself must expect finally to be a victim of the same disorder. "Doomed to what I then considered a living death," says the author, "I thought of epilepsy, I dreamed of epilepsy, until thousands of times during the six years that this disquieting idea persisted, my overwrought imagination seemed to draw me to the very verge of an attack." Fear oppressed him until, as he writes, suddenly in his despair his nerves seemed to snap, "like so many minute bands of rubber, stretched beyond their elastic limit."

Unfortunately, at about that time, Beers had a severe attack of influenza. This greatly lowered his physical vitality and his resistance to the depression.

So overwhelming was his belief that heredity was going to claim him as a victim of epilepsy that, at times, he was unable to express his thoughts in words. He was hardly able to answer questions and the apprehension that at any moment he might be unable to speak was overpowering. In his office work his hand was unsteady and he found it difficult to read words and figures because of his mental confusion. Every moment he expected to fall into an epileptic attack. Naturally these feelings of depression had their ups and downs, but the fear was always in his mind.

Finally he became subject to delusions. He was convinced that what he long expected had, at last, occurred. He believed that he was a confirmed victim of the affliction, and went to bed.

Feeling that he would rather die than live an epileptic, the thought of suicide entered his mind. At one time early in the morning he arose, approached the window, opened the blinds, "and looked out—and down." He would jump and end it all. But the time had not come when he was ready to give up his life. Not yet was he so desperate that he dared take the leap.

Not long after that, however, the fear that he was doomed by heredity overcame his desire to live. Like all insane people, he tried to mislead those around him, pretending to read a newspaper which was only an unintelligible confusion of print.

"My brain," he says, "was in a ferment. It felt as if pricked with a thousand needles at white heat. My whole body felt as though it might be torn apart by the nervous strain under which I labored."

The agony finally became so intense that it was irresistible. With a mad desire to dash his brains out on the pavement below, he sprang to the window and climbed out. For a few moments he clung to the sill, and then he let go. Fortunately his fall was broken in several ways and happily he missed the stone pavement by a few inches.

Though badly jarred, he did not lose consciousness, and curiously enough the horrible dread which had oppressed him for six years disappeared with the shock of striking the ground. "At no time since that instant have I experienced one of my imaginary attacks; nor has my mind, even for a moment, entertained such an idea." But unfortunately his mind had not yet found itself. As he himself says, he was unquestionably insane before the physical injuries of the fall complicated his case by the spinal and cerebral shock of the concussion. "Within a few hours after my fall, my brain was in a seriously disordered condition."

To cut a long and fascinating story short, while in the hospital he had hallucinations of hearing, heard false voices, and had other delusions that are often experienced by disordered minds. Finally he was cured and, in that recovery, we have the impressive story of *A Mind That Found Itself.* The interest of this sensational case is the powerful influence that fear may exert upon the mind if one is but convinced of the hopelessness of a real or imaginary illness. The fear in this case was caused by the belief that he was doomed by unconquerable inherited tendencies to the lifelong fate of an epileptic.

We are interested, of course, in the methods of preventing fears from getting a grip on children, but since the havoc which they may cause is not appreciated by many parents and teachers it will be profitable to turn, for a moment, to their physical effects. In running through these bodily reactions, however, we should not forget that they are produced in children as well as in adults.

First, let us make the general statement that fear excites and accelerates every bodily function. The action of the heart is increased, sometimes, indeed, so much as to cause death. Sensations may be produced, perverted, and distorted. These imaginary sensations are usually located in certain parts of the body. Children who continually hear descriptions by their parents of real or imaginary pains around the heart are likely to think that they have the same "disease." Suggestion is powerfully effective with them. A man recently told the writer that he lay awake many a night, when a boy, fearing that he would die of heart disease because his mother was constantly talking about her pains in that region of her body.

Experiments have shown that the heart centers can be inhibited in their action to almost any extent. The degree of inhibition will, naturally, depend upon the degree of fright. In certain instances paralysis of these centers has caused death.

Anxiety, which is only a prolonged state of fear, may produce nearly all of the ills to which man is heir. By its action on the nervous system it causes contraction of the small capillaries and thus produces circulatory and digestive disturbances. Anxiety and worry may become a habit, and then the bodily functions are weakened to such an extent that resistance to disease germs is lessened and one is more likely to "catch" whatever contagious or infectious diseases are going around.

As a result of a wide experience with all sorts of "sick" people, Dr. Sadler says that, in his opinion, "outside of surgical disorders, contagious diseases, and accidents, nine-tenths of all the people who come to the physician seeking relief for their ailments are suffering from functional disturbances which have had their origin in the indulgence of some form of fear; that this great host of human sufferers are victims of circulatory, nervous, and digestive disturbances originating in the imagination."[1]

We have spoken of the bodily effects of fears because they begin so often in childhood. Practically all of the fears of children and adults are conditioned. They are not inherited. They are created by producing the fear response to objects or conditions which would not normally be an adequate cause of fear.

Darkness of itself, for example, is not an adequate reason for being afraid. A dark room in a house is just as safe as one that is illuminated, but many children are made to fear darkness by ghost stories, by tales of burglars, or in other ways.

Dread of what the future may bring forth, again, is caused by frequent reference to misfortunes that may come. Youngsters from their earliest years should be taught to meet and to overcome whatever situations may arise. This training should not be by reference to possible disasters but rather by positive action in particular situations that arise. A case in point has just been related to the writer.

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[1] William S. Sadler, *The Truth about Mind Cure,* (McClurg), p. 7.

A girl had been brought up in a wealthy family, but she had been taught that money has some disadvantages, that it tends to weaken initiative and responsibility. When an unpleasant experience came into her young life, she was told to "go to it and beat it." Nothing, she was taught, is unpleasant of itself. It is made so by the one who prefers suffering to conquering.

Then, when she was ready to go to an expensive college, her father lost his money. Her reaction was interesting. "Cheer up, dad," she said, "I will go to another, less expensive college and earn a part of my expenses by the typewriting which you had me take. Isn't it good that I learned stenography?"

The variety and causes of fears are so numerous that we can name only a few of the more common. Too much authority, especially when it is unreasonable and tyrannical, is a potent factor and, on the other hand, too little control in the sense of absence of sympathetic guidance produces its share of nervous devastation. Coddling and humoring also play a leading rôle in this tragic drama of life. The only child and the youngest have long been known to start their careers with a heavy handicap. By inference, if not with words, the youngest is usually made to feel his insignificance. The older brother puts him "where he belongs," and the parents do not include him in the family councils. Quite commonly he receives only two forms of attention—maddening domination and petting. Naturally, he is irritated at his exclusion from serious family conferences, and, in his adaptation to the position of family pet, he gets results by cajoling—the method of the weak. Practically all of this is also true of girls. Like the youngest boy, they are family ornaments.

The only child has all of the disadvantages of the youngest in the family with additional parental mistakes thrown in for good measure. Whether boy or girl, the only child tyrannizes over the family, is idolized by grandparents and parents, and so acquires the habit of feeling abused when not the center of loving interest and fond attention. Every little ache or pain is exaggerated by the solicitous mother until the unfortunate child feels that its death would mean the destruction of the universe.

At the table, what others eat is not good enough for the only child. The "dear" boy or girl "has a weak stomach," though, more than likely it is filled with candy. "Tommy has a delicate appetite," is a remark which the writer heard yesterday. "He is very particular about what he eats." Most only children are, and they must be humored because they are choice bits of humanity who are going to do great things in the world. Perhaps they would if their parents did not spoil them.[2]

At school, however, such a child meets his Waterloo, since, for the teacher, he is one among many, and his schoolmates do not take much stock in the notion that the world will stop revolving if his feelings or body are hurt. Consequently, here the self-esteem of the only child is outraged, and the contradiction between being worshiped at home and treated as an ordinary mortal at school is irreconcilable. It literally "gets on his nerves." Often such a child seeks compensation at home for being a nobody at school. His tyrannic demands multiply and the loving mother dare not refuse because the darling boy flies into such a temper that she fears lest he may injure himself. The stage has now been set, whether it be a boy or girl, for future maladjustment; and maladjustment is fertile soil for fears.

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[2] An investigation at Columbia University did not find the only child handicapped, but the number investigated was too few for conclusions. See H. L. Hollingworth, *Mental Growth and Decline* (Appleton), p. 215.

The youngest and the only child are affectionately suppressed. Each has been protected with loving care from the troubles which every child should learn to meet and has been ignored in conversations about serious matters. Many parents never discover that even the youngest child finally grows older. Constant repression, even though it be from love, does not develop the courage to speak and act openly. Such a child, therefore, is an easy prey for secret violation, with associates, of the social and legal codes. Hypocritical pretenses of virtue and abuse are likely to become fixed reactions; and hypocrites, even sweet little ones who are just learning the gentle art of coy dissimulation, fear discovery; and fear has a bad habit of spreading through the lower strata of the mind and forming complexes.

But if the only and the youngest child are such perplexing problems, and the oldest uses the natural prerogative and freedom of his unique position in the family to rule his younger brothers or sisters with the inborn wisdom of the "Crown Prince," while acquiring the intimate relation with the Almighty so characteristic of born rulers, surely the model child is safe.

As a rule, a "model child" is model because he has been trained by the authoritative method in the home. Implicit obedience, which is desirable during the earliest years, has been continued through the age when boys and girls should acquire independence in thought and action. Thus, the "model child" is model because he has no independence. He does what he is told. He violates no rules. At least he is not caught in the act, though not infrequently he is a model little hypocrite, leading what may be called a "double life." He is given positions of authority over others in the school and, if he runs true to form, he plays the game by "snitching" on those who are not "model."

Never learning to think and act independently, the model child disappoints himself after leaving the school. Without ability to decide, act, and take the praise or blame, he is likely to occupy a subordinate position where he can do what he did in the home and school, namely, follow instructions, do what he is told to do and nothing more.

Spoiled children are of many varieties, and each type has a different cause, but all of them are on the road to failure in adjustment and achievement. They have not learned to meet perplexing and disagreeable realities. Their method has been evasion which has been permitted, and even encouraged, in the home; and outside of the home evasion spells failure which brings in its train one or more of the various fear complexes.

Many things go on below the level of consciousness. Some of them have happy results and others are disastrous. Those which have bad effects start from a never-ending, corroding, fear—fear of criticism, of failure, a feeling, true or false, of inadequacy for the responsibilities that one has assumed.

The teachers of the Boston public schools have recently investigated the fears of children in the fifth and later grades. These teachers were convinced that "peculiar and objectionable conduct is often due partly to fear. In his confused effort at defense against fear, a child often becomes indifferent, insolent, or aloof." [3] The report throws a spotlight into the recesses of the mind of many a child. It is especially significant because, from an adult viewpoint, the reasons for some of the fears were so trivial that they were likely to escape observation. But for the child they were big with importance, since they caused a mental commotion which, at times, became a wild tumult.

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[3] Boston Public Schools, 1928, Document No. 2.

Fear of ridicule was perhaps the most frequent in early childhood. The causes were many—fear of being thought "cheap" when compelled to return a purchase to a store fear of being laughed at when wearing clothes of a certain color, fear of being called a "baby" because of wearing overshoes, fear of jokes when long pants were first put on and worn to school, fear that a certain style of hair cut would attract attention, fear of being "caught" helping mother, and fear of being called a "sissy" if seen with a girl.

Some of these fears were recalled from earlier years. Not all of the feared results happened—the child was not always laughed at—but the expectation and dread were just as vivid. Many a schoolmate's look was misinterpreted and translated into ridicule.

Of course there were fears of objects, sounds, conditions and situations. As might be expected, fear of darkness, of thunder, and lightning was mentioned frequently. Fears caused by superstitions were common. Sometimes the superstitions were believed by the family; in other cases they were mentioned half jokingly, yet they struck in and festered. Finally, there were fears that cannot well be classified, fear of a new school, of an audience, of death, especially in children who had been taken to funerals, fear of the Devil, fear of a whistle that blew at night, an undefined fear of the future, and fear of failure to attain a desired goal. These are only samples, but they give some idea of the wide range of children's fears.

Our knowledge of the elements of personality is limited but we do know that a goodly number of its ingredients are produced by what goes on below the level of consciousness and that repressed fears are prominent actors in this play of life. Will it end as a healthy, buoyant drama or as a tragedy?

No one is a real hypocrite, Samuel Butler once said, until he is convinced that he isn't one. When that time comes, repression is complete but the malignant infection continues active under the surface.

All sorts of plausible excuses for failure—misunderstandings and hard luck—are made in the neural factory below consciousness. When they come to the surface they satisfy the desire for self-exculpation; but the submerged fear of being at fault, of not being true to one's ideals, purposes or ambitions, festers underneath and makes the foundation for a discontented, nervous, barren existence.

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CHAPTER XI

BOYS

NO teacher or parent needs to be told that boys are a wholly different zoölogical specimen from girls. Of course we are thinking of secondary sex qualities. Certain differences become manifest during early childhood. Boys—even very young ones—are more aggressive, more dominating, and rougher in their behavior.

This is so well known to observing parents who have small boys and girls that it may be wondered why we give such self-evident facts. The reason is that it is not so generally known that these variations require different treatment in the rearing of children. This statement calls for explanation and, perhaps, modification.

Girls of practically the same age as their brothers acquire some of the male characteristics if they play with boys rather than with girls. Tomboys adopt many of the qualities which are peculiar to boys. This at once raises the question whether these secondary differences have any real sex basis or whether, on the other hand, they appear because the girls are treated differently. This question we do not intend to discuss at present because it is unessential to our problem, namely, the rearing of boys.

Almost from the moment when boys begin to walk, they prefer vigorous and sometimes dangerous games. "Treat 'em rough" is a male characteristic that begins very early in life.

While some small boys sit quietly playing with dolls, and while this amusement is sometimes carried on for several years, it is not what is to be expected and its encouragement may be questioned. We have no wish to stress this point. What we do maintain is that opportunity should be provided for sports which are known to appeal to boys.

In the following discussion the writer should not be understood to believe in instincts as definite responses caused by inherited neural mechanisms which will be set in motion by certain stimuli or situations. An instinct is a vague unrest which must be satisfied in some way but not necessarily by *one* way. The methods by which the unrest of children and adolescents may be relieved are determined by the psychology of childhood. The stimuli or situations to which the attention of teachers and parents is directed in this chapter are objective influences. They are external factors which have been found to satisfy the vague unrest of youths. They may be called examples of sublimation by those who prefer a Freudian word. The practical question is not what underlies and causes the unrest. Every one knows that it exists, and the question to which teachers and parents wish an answer is, How may it be removed and the energies of boys and girls be diverted into social channels? If the methods suggested below work, they do so because they square with boy psychology. How the boy got so; where his characteristics came from, is unimportant. We are interested in a guiding principle for helping boys, not in any one device. Does the plan work? This, teachers and parents not only have a right to ask, they should also insist upon proof. The reply to the question is, Yes, it works. The evidence is convincing. The detailed proof is given elsewhere.[1]

It was discovered a long time ago that boys revel in the games that are reminiscent of Indians and trappers. How they got that way, we do not care. All that is needed is the opportunity, plenty of space and freedom. The suggestion usually comes from the boys themselves.

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[1] See Edgar James Swift, *Learning by Doing* (Bobbs-Merrill).

A few days ago the writer was passing a large yard in one of the suburbs of St. Louis. Four boys had dug a deep hole in the ground and covered it with boards. When asked what they were doing one of the lads said: "We're trappers and we want a place to live where we can cook without the Indians seeing the smoke of our fire." An examination of their cave showed that they had all of the essentials for camp life. A rough brick fireplace had been built, old blankets and quilts were ready for their bed, and wooden guns and knives were at hand for use if they were attacked by savages.

Of course, few of those who live in cities have ground enough at their disposal to permit the boys to act out their primitive tendencies in this way. This is one of the unfortunate conditions of city life. But the urge should be taken into account and provided for in some way.

The Boy Scout organizations build on these primitive characteristics. This is really the psychological explanation of their success. They take account of the yearnings of boys and utilize them for development.

Has the reader ever faced the question why Boy Scouts work so hard over things which seem to have no more interest than the studies that their schoolmates try to evade? Why, for example, do Scouts spend so much time learning the names, descriptions and habits of birds? Why do they work at the art of giving first aid to those who need it for any reason? Why do they study trees that they may name them? Why, again, do they learn to make a fire by rubbing two sticks together when matches will do it in half a minute? It is because trappers did these things and they want to be good scouts.

Now, if the matter ended here these facts would have no point. But the Scout Master carries this urge for the primitive over into the mental and moral development of the boys. An illustration will make this clear.

Not many days ago the writer happened to be boarding a street car at the University station. Two Scouts and a dozen college girls were standing on the platform. One of the boys tried to get into the car ahead of the girls, but the other seized him by the collar, jerked him back and threw him down on the concrete platform. Then, in a stage whisper quite audible to the writer, he said to the one whom he had thrown, "Don't you know that a Scout must be polite?"

Another story was told to the writer by one of his students who had been acting as substitute teacher for a week in a suburban school. On the first day of her appearance in the school, she saw that one of the boys was "armed to the teeth" with wooden daggers and pistols. She said nothing until she noticed that he was stabbing the girl in front of him. Then she went to him and quietly asked why he was doing it.

"I'm a cowboy," was the reply.

"But," said the young teacher, "do you know that if you did that out west where the cowboys live they would shoot you?"

That was a new idea to the boy, who naturally did not want to be shot, and so he asked why.

"Because cowboys protect girls instead of abusing them," was the reply.

Then the teacher left the boy with his pistols and daggers, but he did not use them again. He seemed to be reflecting the rest of the morning, between attempts to study, on the very serious problem, how he was to escape being shot when he went west. This, at least, was the appearance. In reality he was chagrined that he did not know how a cowboy should treat girls.

At the close of the session the teacher asked him if he would like to read a book on cowboys, and the next day she brought him one of the better sort. During the remainder of her substitution in the school that boy was her main support. There was nothing which he would not do for her.

We have been dealing with psychological principles and the two examples which we have given illustrate the way in which primitive tendencies may be utilized in the training and development of boys. Too often parents and teachers look upon these racial characteristics as something to be suppressed. They are a nuisance. At least they are so regarded by those who are uninformed about the psychology of youth.

As a matter of fact, these primitive tendencies are bound to assert themselves in some way. Try to suppress them, and you only check them at one point. They break through somewhere else. They represent a craving for excitement and for self-assertion. The primitive outlet is appealing, both because it is primitive and because of the imagined danger which to boys of a certain age is very real. Cowboys and trappers had to be true to their code of action to survive. They had to learn many things. They were compelled to work hard. Weaklings and loafers quickly fell by the wayside. The point of view, you see, is full of thrills which can be utilized in making boys alert to the social, moral, and school codes of behavior.

Boys of the wealthy class are unfortunate. They do not have the advantages of the children of the well-to-do or the poor. Membership in the Boy Scouts and kindred organizations is beneath them. They have their automobiles and, in comparison with joy rides, tramping through the woods to study trees and birds is tame sport. Why walk when you can ride?

This puts a serious responsibility on wealthy parents—a responsibility which they have not fully realized. The rich send their boys to private schools, because they think that the instruction is better and, sometimes, because they believe that the children of private schools are better companions for their boys than those in public schools. The writer has no desire to argue this question. Instruction in private schools is often better not because the teachers are better but because they have fewer children to oversee. The second reason which influences some parents is probably never true. The boys of wealthy parents are not better associates than those whose parents cannot afford the expense of private schools. We will pass this, however, because, at present, we are interested in other disadvantages of boys from wealthy families.

Social organizations plan for the social development of boys in the congested city areas. It may be only the conversion of an old building into a gymnasium. The writer knows of such a case. The boys of a certain region for many city blocks were engaged in all sorts of lawless actions. They stoned street cars, appropriated automobiles and did many other things to rid their lives of the monotony that boys abhor. An old building was made into a gymnasium. Nothing was done to it except to install a few pieces of apparatus, but this renovated boy life over a large adjoining area. The caretaker was awakened in the morning by boys clamoring for admission, and they had to be driven out in the afternoon to send them home to supper.

The whole region, so far as the boys were concerned, was made over. The youngsters who had been stoning street cars and stealing automobiles were merely looking for some way of using their surplus energy. They were revolting against the monotony of life. This is the way of boys. When bored they find some way of making life lively and interesting.

It is a mistake, however, to assume that they must have furious and reckless excitement. Competition in sports and, curiously enough, competition in what adults would call work, meets their needs. The success of the old gymnasium, to which we have just referred, is an illustration of one kind of activity that satisfies their demand for excitement. They do not need to stage a holdup, to kidnap and murder a boy, or shoot a man, to get the thrill that their primitive nature craves.

The things that "satisfy" sometimes seem so dull to staid adults that they cannot believe that they will work. Like the proof of the goodness of the proverbial pudding, however, the evidence here also is in the result. The practical management of school classes—assignment of lessons and determination of the penalty for laggards—has been found to meet the need for thrills in school. It is also training in thinking and in social adjustment.

To those who understand the psychology of childhood, this is not strange. Boys want to manage things. They do not care much what they manage but they want to manage something. Since this is true, parents should see to it that they have something to direct. Many progressive school teachers make use of this psychological characteristic of boys by putting them in charge of various school activities. In some cases the teacher has practically turned over the management of the class to its members.

A few years ago, when pupil government was more common than it is to-day, the writer visited many schools in various parts of the country in which this method of management was used. The striking thing about all of them was the greater interest of the boys in their school studies as well as the spirit of the school in other matters. The psychological explanation is that in those schools the boys regarded the school and its work as their own. They found an outlet for the exuberance of youth. They had an opportunity to lead and manage, and, strangely enough, this furnished all the excitement that they required. The boys in those schools were serious with regard to their work but no less serious in their play. They were more severe in the punishments that they inflicted on those who were guilty of infraction of rules than the teacher would have been. They initiated plans for the school and they helped to carry them out successfully. They were positive rather than negative in their reaction to situations.[2]

What we have just said is evidence that "excitement" may be very moderate from the adult point of view and still satisfy the craving of boys for an outlet for their surplus energy. But pupil government, to a large extent, is a matter of past history because so few teachers are able to manage such a situation.

Parents, in their turn, have, in many instances, given up all serious attempts at control and direction. For them the problem is too involved and mysterious. "I am trusting to God and luck," said the mother of a boy of fifteen to the writer a few days ago. "George is too much of a problem. I am afraid that if I mix in with it now I will make matters worse, so I am just hoping for the best."

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[2] Those interested in this plan will find a full discussion in the writer's *The Psychology of Youth* (Scribner), chap. ii.

Now what happens when the problem is given up? The latest "exhibit" in the case is two young adolescents who have just been arrested in one of the southern states for a series of holdups, ending in the death of one of the men who refused to throw up his hands quickly enough. Both of these boys come from good families. The father of each is well-to-do and, in both instances, the family is prominent. What was the cause? If we take the boys' words for it, they wanted a thrill. This word is so common to-day in the newspapers that it is almost trite but it represents a psychological fact in the psychology of youth.

A recent report of the New York State Commission of Correction says: "After a careful study, the Commission feels that criminal tendencies have their beginning in very early youth." But observation of those who commit these criminal acts indicates that in the great majority of cases the motive is desire for a new sensation, an adventure. Life is too tame for boys.

As this is being written, one edition of a daily paper gives the adventures of five young adolescent boys. All are from respectable families of the well-to-do class. Their heredity is good. Two are sons of physicians. They were sentenced to five years in a reformatory for robbing a filling station; another, the son of respected parents, was arrested for stealing an automobile; the fourth faces a murder charge for killing a high-school classmate in a hold-up; and the fifth, arrested as a participant in a safe-blowing job, is the son of a banker. All of them were looking for excitement, and a little money for more excitement.

Was it necessary for these boys to fall into crime? The writer does not believe it. Yet it is the nature of boys to crave adventure. The dull, monotonous life of adults is tiresome for them. Substitutes must be found to satisfy their spontaneous adventuresome needs. Excitement calls and the boys follow on. They do not foresee the consequences. What they want is fun. Will it be provided for them, will it be planned, or will they find it for themselves? This is one of the serious problems of training children.

A few years ago, the writer investigated by letters or personal interviews the cause of the escapades of a large number of boys. All of these youngsters were of the so-called middle class from thoroughly respected families. One twelve-year-old boy bore the proud name, "King of the Bandits." When he was arrested his only regret was, "My pals wouldn't stick by me, so I had to give up." Half-a-dozen boys, ranging from eleven to fifteen, had Wild West dreams and started out to become two-gun men. When caught, they were encamped by the side of the Rock Island railroad tracks on their way to the West and fame. Another group thought it would be great fun to frighten one of their schoolmates with a "Black-Hand letter." These boys were about fourteen years of age and their demand was for the immense sum of ten dollars with a threat of death if it was not produced immediately. The letter was signed, "King of the Black Hand."[3]

Two boys were arrested for stealing seventy-five dollars from a grocery store. The money was found in a cave which they had dug near a dump heap. Their explanation was that life was so dull that they wanted a little excitement. This was before hold-ups had become as frequent and as profitable as they are to-day.

These are only a few, selected from more than a hundred cases which the writer has gathered during the last few years. In every case the explanation is the same. It may be worded differently by different boys. The popular phrase of a "thrill" was not so common seven or eight years ago as it is to-day. Excitement was the word used more frequently, but in every case the meaning is the same. The boys were bored with life at home and in the school and they wanted some diversion. So they found it.

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[3] See Edgar James Swift, *Mind in the Making* (Scribner), Chap. ii.

Violating a law has special charm for boys. They even study when studying is forbidden. As this is being written, the daily press says that the boys in several schools of Arkansas are passing around books on evolution and reading them secretly. One group was caught "with the goods" by the principal and then the boys admitted that they and others had committed the "crime" of trying to learn something about the descent of man. Now, no books on evolution are "thrillers." All of them are pretty hard reading, yet these boys were determined to find out about the subject because they were forbidden to do so.

Some time ago, the societies to which boys belong were investigated. The amazing number of 934 societies was reported by 1,139 boys. Another investigation found that 1,022 boys were represented in 862 societies. Sometimes a boy belongs to several. As one writer has said, "American children left to themselves organize." The question of interest to parents and educators is then, What will these societies do? What will be the direction of their activities? Left to themselves, the answer to this question is quite clear. The boys will do something that will satisfy their racial craving. Suggestion will be the promoting cause, and every one knows the suggestions which are prominent in the newspapers and conversation of young adolescents to-day.

In a recent discussion of boys and crime, George W. Kirchwey, formerly New York State Commissioner on Prison Reform and one-time warden of Sing Sing Prison, is reported to have said: "Modern life, with its increasing insistence on ease and comfort, is a mode of life built up not for the young, but for the elderly who have lost their adventurousness. . . . The passion for experimentation, for adventure, for conflict, are qualities of youth, and tend to decay with advancing years."

This time of boy life, as teachers know quite well, is a period of hero worship. The reader need only recall the baseball and aëroplane heroes, to say nothing of the famous aëroplane stowaways. Hero worship is quite the proper thing, and if the boys worship no one worse than baseball players and stowaways, probably they will be fortunate. But the hold-up man, to-day, is taking the place of western two-gun men of years ago. Banditry looks very easy, and it is profitable. These facts add force to the racial incentive that adventure offers. Should not parents endeavor to make use of this tendency to hero worship in the training of their youngsters?

As a matter of fact, boys are ready to worship any one who distinguishes himself. They are not very particular about their hero but they must worship some one. If no one else is supplied, they will find their own hero and the daily press constantly reminds us of the type of hero whom they choose when the selection is left to them.

Those who observe impersonally the relationship between parents and their boys—as teachers do—have made several interesting discoveries with regard to human nature. Many parents will go to any extreme in their sentimental desire to ignore patent facts about their children. A boy was dismissed from one of the large eastern academies for a combination of offenses about which he had not told the truth. The father who went to the principal to beg for the reinstatement of his boy was unable to understand the facts. "Why," he said, "during his whole sixteen years he has never told me a lie." This is simplicity raised to the *n*th degree.

Aside from the conscious training which the boys receive, the conditions of the home play an important rôle in their development. It can hardly be expected that the father and mother will never disagree. That would put too great a demand upon human nature, but disagreements should never be settled in the presence of the children. Perhaps if parents would make it a rule to retire to privacy when they feel their tempers rising their own disagreements would not be so serious. It would have the same effect as the trite maxim, "Count ten before speaking when angry." Most disagreements are exaggerated by the indignation of the moment, and going into seclusion to smooth out matters would in many cases give a humorous touch to the situation. At all events, lack of harmony between parents in the presence of their children is a serious matter and is disastrous to training. Toward the young, in matters of control and discipline there should always be a united front.

Between parental conflicts and overindulgence, the training of boys is likely to follow a tumultuous course. Alfred E. Stearns, principal of Phillips Andover Academy, with keen insight into the nature and troubles of boys, has told of an irate mother and submissive father who came to complain of the discipline which had been inflicted upon their darling. After a long discussion with many accusations against the Academy, the mother demanded that she see a letter which the principal had written to the authorities of another school. The last sentence of this letter ran as follows: "The boy, as I have told you, is not bad but the real trouble is that he has been badly spoiled by his mother."

That sentence gave the father the courage to speak his mind. "God," he exclaimed, "I'm glad I came, and that isn't the worst of it; I have two daughters at home and she has ruined them too."[4]

Parents should not forget the days of their own youth. They should realize that their children will make mistakes but the more intelligent among them will remember also the value for their later years of the discipline and just punishment which their offenses brought upon them.

During his early years of teaching, the writer was in charge of the dormitory of a boys' boarding school. All of the pupils came from wealthy families. They were supplied with all the money that they wanted and they had been spared the penalties which should have been inflicted because of their misdemeanors. They were well-meaning boys but they had been spoiled. The entire faculty of the preceding year had been dismissed because of inability to maintain discipline, and the writer, just out of college and without any knowledge of boys except that given by the memories of his own escapades, was expected to maintain discipline in the dormitory occupied by fifty of these spoiled youngsters.

Irritated under the requirements which the head master demanded, the boys planned a midnight demonstration which should prove the inability of the new house master to maintain discipline. Caught in the turmoil of midnight carousal, the leaders were dismissed and the others had a private seance with the head master. The outcome was an armistice which ended in a treaty of peace. To-day those rebels are among the choice and devoted friends of the master for whose dismissal they worked as boys.

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[4] See *The Education of the Modern Boy* in the bibliography.

We have already said that boys want to be controlled until they find that it is not necessary, but they want to be controlled fairly. Perhaps their most insistent demand is what they call a "square deal." A punishment that is deserved they accept and later they thank the parent or teacher for inflicting it. It is, of course, not to be expected that young boys will immediately appreciate these things. Discipline is essential to development. Punishment is an accessory which we must sometimes use because of our own inefficiency. The assumption that the two are identical is a mistake. It has led to the abolition of discipline in the home.

Parents are complaining of the lack of respect manifested for them by their boys. The wishes of the parents are ignored. For this the children are blamed, but human nature has not greatly changed in a thousand years. As far back as records go we have the same complaint that boys and girls no longer respect their parents and their teachers. If adults would give their defense mechanism a little rest and examine their own behavior, the training of the home would be more psychological and more effective. It is the parents who need disciplining in this new age of freedom.

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CHAPTER XII

GIRLS

DURING the early period of life, the distinction between boys and girls is not great. Both readily play the same games. They acquiesce, to a large extent, in the same methods of control. Perhaps the young girl is somewhat more responsive to restraint and discipline, though the number of young adolescent girls who run away from home because of reprimands might raise a question here. The author, selecting clippings at random from his notes, has just drawn out six such cases. At all events, boys begin at an early age to show the masculine tendencies.

Formerly, it was thought that girls have many feminine characteristics which are now known to be due largely to the environment in which they are reared. Girls who play with boys during early childhood, as we have said elsewhere, adopt quite easily boyish standards of ethics and behavior. If further proof of this were needed, we find it in the success of the Campfire Girls and other similar organizations. The Girl Scouts, at the last report, had upwards of two hundred thousand members.

Several women, however, who have charge of various organizations of girls have assured the writer that it is necessary for them to step in and assume control more frequently than seems to be needed in similar groups of boys. If these leaders of girls' organizations are correct, girls' groups break up much more readily into cliques. The personal element seems to play a more prominent part in their lives even during early childhood. They are less concerned with the success of what we may call the gang than are boys. Jealousies arise more frequently, and jealousy always involves the personal element. "The boy is 'gangy' and the girl is individualistic," the writer was told by Edward F. Bigelow, a manager of girls' camps.

How much of this is due to the environment of the past it is difficult to say. Until very recently girls have been suppressed. Their opinions were not so highly regarded as those of boys. They were forced to observe conventions to which boys were not subjected. These and other facts have made it necessary for them to attain their ends by subtle methods. To put it somewhat crudely, they were obliged to "work" their parents and others by those devices which we commonly call feminine. This could easily lead to the greater tendency to deceive which we find rather characteristic of girls. Whether these tendencies are wholly due to the environment of the past cannot, at present, be determined. The answer to this question lies in the future but, since girls now have much the same freedom as boys enjoy, we may confidently anticipate information that will settle the question in the course of time. The present writer is definitely of the opinion that some of these characteristics, at any rate, are peculiarly feminine. He is also doubtful whether it is wise to try to make the two sexes alike in all respects.

A rather wide experience in teaching boys and girls has led to the opinion that sex differences in certain kinds of actions may continue along with a more masculine view of gang ethics and behavior. Let us take a concrete case, which is selected from many similar ones which have come within the author's experience.

During the war when men teachers were scarce, a young woman was engaged by a school superintendent with the understanding that she was to coach and manage the boys' basket-ball team as well as be in charge of the gymnastic work of the girls. This young woman, who had just graduated from college, traveled over the state as manager of the boys' basket-ball team and not only secured obedience but maintained the respect of the boys during all of the trips.

The reason for this success was that the girl had two brothers near enough her own age for play. The result was that she played with them and their associates. She had adapted herself to the ethics of boys and understood them. She was a tomboy in the best sense of the word—a cultured young woman when the writer had her in his classes, yet she knew as much about the masculine peculiarities and characteristics of boyhood as though she herself were a boy. But, in other respects, she was definitely feminine.

The physical training of girls has not received the attention in the home which it demands. Some years ago a comparison was made between the measurements of vital capacity of New York City schoolgirls and others, of approximately the same age, in Nebraska. At six years of age the New York City girls had a much smaller lung capacity than the Nebraska girls of the same age. At seven the eastern girls were still below their western sisters. The investigation showed, further, that girls respond physiologically to exercise and gain an increased lung capacity.

Boys show an accelerated increase in lung capacity at fourteen years of age, then a brief period of comparative rest follows, with another marked increase at about sixteen. In the case of girls, however, there is an irregularity in the increase of lung capacity which cannot be ascribed to sex. We might expect the age for retardation in this respect to vary with sex but irregularity is another matter. It is quite clear that girls, too commonly, do not have the opportunity to increase their lung capacity by suitable exercise.

An interesting observation was made, some years ago, on the lung capacity of dull and bright pupils and it was found that dull pupils have less lung capacity during the pubertal period than those who are brighter. From what we know of the effect of proper oxygenation in the open air, it is more than probable that dullness of pupils is closely related at times to their smaller lung capacity. The writer does not mean that some children are not born dull, but there are varying degrees of dullness, and it is quite certain that a healthy vigorous body will have its effect on the minds of the dull and bright alike.[1]

We know more to-day than formerly about the effect of the ultra-violet rays contained in outdoor sunlight. That these rays have a tremendous effect upon the physical health of children as well as of adults is abundantly established. For these reasons, girls should play outdoor games and should take long walks. Unfortunately, walking for exercise and fun is out of date. The automobile is so common that few need to walk, and in physical exercise as well as in other matters no one wishes to go to unnecessary trouble.

Those who doubt that walking is out of date have only to observe the shoes which young girls wear. This is not a chapter on dress and the writer has no intention of moralizing about high-heeled shoes. He is quite aware also that the feet of different individuals differ. One woman remarked, not long ago, that if girls were to wear sensible shoes they must have sensible feet. It strains one's credulity, however, to believe that any feet are so constructed that it is necessary to walk upon the toes.

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[1] It has been suggested that the vital capacity of dullards is low because they do not know how to follow directions, but from the evidence which we have for the effect of good health on mental growth this does not seem to the writer to be a satisfactory explanation. At any rate, it is an unproven theory.

Of course, girls should not be made a "mark." Neither their dresses nor their shoes should be "out of style." Nothing could be worse for their emotional and mental development than to be dressed in a way which would make them feel "peculiar" and different from their associates.

We are not advocating a reform in fashion. Still less are we urging mothers to dress their young daughters in ways which will produce an emotional complex that will surely bring the feeling of inferiority with all of its associated miseries.

Except at parties, however, high heels are not needed to save girls from the feeling of isolation and peculiarity. There are girls enough who, because of the requirement of their arches or of sensible mothers, wear shoes that permit walking without producing the fear of being "out of date." Where this feeling exists it always brings emotional disaster. Consequently, at all hazards, it should be avoided.

We are concerned at present with the health of young girls. It is not necessary that girls should become athletes. This would, of course, be good for them but we are not urging it. We do, however, maintain that the good or ill health of the woman is established during girlhood.

Teachers are doing all that they can to give girls opportunity for exercise. The school without a playground to-day is regarded as a monstrosity. Gymnastic exercises are also usually provided. But the gymnasium is indoors where the ultra-violet rays cannot reach the children and, because exercise is not the chief function of the school, the gymnastic games are often scheduled only twice a week. The fallacy of this situation as regards the health of girls is evident, but parents rarely recognize it. Boys, on the other hand, do not need to be encouraged to play in the open air.

Cities are alive to the needs of municipal playgrounds but the serious fact about these playgrounds is that they are located in the sections of the city inhabited by the poorer classes. Just why children of the wealthy people do not need the ultra-violet rays is not clear. The assumption, of course, is that wealthy parents have enough intelligence to provide exercise for their girls. This, unfortunately, is contrary to facts. We again, repeat that walking is out of date and once more we say that many girls are so shod that they cannot walk.

The body is a living machine which requires oxygen and the actinic rays of the sun quite as much as it requires food. Waste matter, again, is being continually produced and if the machine is to function well it must be eliminated. "Mood," says Dr. Myerson,[2] "is begotten in bowels as well as in brain, and the sedentary [persons] with sluggish insides face life with less hope and energy than they of active insides." Outdoor exercise is one of the ways in which these requirements are met.

At about eleven years of age, boys join baseball clubs. Those belonging to the poorer and well-to-do classes are likely to become Boy Scouts and take long tramps several times a week, but the girl at this age commonly ceases her outdoor games. She now thinks herself a young lady and she puts away, with other childish things, the games of earlier days. Frequently she is reminded by her mother that running, jumping and romping are not fitting to a young lady. Not knowing the value to her health of outdoor play, she gives it up. The physical-training teacher of Wellesley College is reported to have said that the most helpless people she has ever seen are our college girls in games. If they ever learned to play they seem to her to have forgotten how. Games and sports are for the poor and for the occasional girl who becomes tremendously interested in tennis and who looks forward to winning the championship.

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[2] Abraham Myerson, *The Psychology of Mental Disorders* (Macmillan), p. 58.

A vicious circle reveals itself in this matter of exercise. Soon after twelve the girl adopts the fashionable mode of dress and ceases to romp and play. Joy rides in automobiles are now in order. When every one has a car it is not "good form" to walk. Then lack of oxygen and deficiency of the actinic rays of the sun cause a deterioration of blood and organs so that the girl becomes physically disinclined to exercise.

A new era is upon us. It came so suddenly that every one is puzzled. Girls are trying to adapt themselves to it without knowing just how to do it. The world rings with freedom. Boys were not wholly unprepared for the new conditions. They always had exercised the right of self-determination but they had done it on the quiet. Consequently, all that they had to do was to come out boldly and do openly what they previously had done in secret. Of course the increased opportunities enlarged their stock of possible adventures but the new chances did not leave them dazed.

Girls, however, are quite as puzzled as their parents. The difference is that the parents know that they themselves are perplexed while their daughters are not clearly conscious of their own uncertainty. The changes of the present day—the freedom, called by some emancipation—open a wholly new world to girls. Their mothers, who were brought up under other conditions, do not understand them. Not infrequently the girls do not understand themselves. They are trying themselves out amid the mysterious conditions of the new life, and sometimes they are trying to their mothers.

Centuries of restrictions have left their impress on the feminine personality, and the mothers of present-day adolescents grew up under different ideas regarding the behavior of young girls. Friction, therefore, in making the new adaptations is not surprising. An illustration from one of our leading universities during the past winter will make this clear. It was a tragedy, acted out to its sorrowful end of suicide. The training of the girl tells its own sad, psychological story.

Her parents have never been able to understand the "modern" girl. Their daughter, they were determined, should be brought up "right," which, of course, was the way in which they were reared. The girl, who was unusually intelligent, began her undergraduate course at sixteen, and in the girls' dormitory, away from home, she drew her first breath of freedom. She did nothing reprehensible, but, like the other girls, she occasionally went to dances and accepted invitations from the boys. She ranked high in her studies and was enjoying life when the blow fell. She happened to be away from the dormitory at a week-end houseparty, and her oversolicitous mother, unable to get her on the long-distance telephone, told the exchange operator that she would reach the university as soon as an automobile could get her there. Several little things had happened to disturb the girl. She had been reveling in the freedom which a loving mother had never allowed. Now she was "caught." She was out when the telephone call came. Questions and explanations would expose her. Probably it was a momentary impulse, but that was enough to cause the act, and the tragedy.

Unfortunately, new ideas play havoc in the minds of many people. If all parents, if even most of them, were wise, some of the present-day notions of freedom for children would be less dangerous.

Whether present conditions are better or worse than they were before the change is unimportant. The significant fact is that the conditions of to-day are here, that they are different from those of yesterday, and that they require a mental readjustment in adults.

Attempts to fit into unusual conditions of to-day are attended with the maladjustment common to new situations. Disagreements in the home and uncertainty about this new freedom into which girls have been suddenly thrown encourage secrecy with accompanying mental conflicts more or less unconscious, and sometimes repression may be detected.

Young adolescent girls put up a bold front. They try to face the puzzle bravely but, to a certain extent, this is the action of their defense mechanism. They want to believe that they are not perplexed, but deep down in the recesses of what we colloquially call the heart the more serious ones are often troubled. They would like to be more certain of what to do and how to do it.

Physical deterioration from lack of outdoor exercise, and nervous conflicts that follow misunderstanding in the home and doubts within themselves, start girls along the road to chronic invalidism which is so characteristic of the women of the so-called upper classes. This invalidism may not show itself when the girls are young, because of the energy of childhood and youth. One need, however, only observe young adolescents in the street cars and in other places to be convinced of their physical weakness. Few of them give any indications whatever of strength and vigor.

Later in life the penalty is exacted for the failure to build a healthy body at the time when the stability of muscles and nerves is being established. The preadolescent and adolescent periods are not the years when the physical organism can stand still with safety. The energy of youth may obscure the danger and give the appearance of vigor but if the girl is not creating and fixing healthy muscles by means of outdoor exercise she is laying the foundation for later frequent breakdowns. Attention has recently been called to the fact that while the general tuberculosis death rate has decreased materially, the death rate of girls between the ages of fifteen and nineteen shows a disturbing increase. In St. Louis a report states that, during the year 1927, 49 per cent more young women died of tuberculosis than young men, while in 1912, the corresponding percentage was less than four. At the 1929 meeting of the National Tuberculosis Association the statement was made that five years ago the tuberculosis death rate for girls between the ages of fourteen and nineteen was 50 per cent higher than that of boys of the same ages while now it is 100 per cent higher.

Probably no one thing is to blame for this alarming increase of tuberculosis among young women. Few problems are so simple as to be explained by one cause. We know, of course, that girls are not suitably clothed to-day. The question of fashion enters here and, as we have said, no girl should be expected to violate conventions in this respect. Observance of fashion by girls is not only desirable, it is necessary; for if any girl were compelled to ignore it she would be made abnormal. The problem for mothers, therefore, is to meet the conditions in a way which will not subject their daughters to this psychological strain. Yet lack of clothing is probably one of the causes for the increase of tuberculosis among young women.

Life, again, is faster to-day than when the mothers were girls. There are many more social demands, and this puts an added tension on the vitality of youth. If parents would only realize that young girlhood is the time when their daughters are building for adult life they would find ways of meeting the dangers to health without making their daughters conspicuous for oddity. If walking clubs were organized so that walking might again become a fashionable recreation, the dangers of a physical breakdown later in life would be greatly lessened.

Young women are now seeking economic independence. Marriage is not as certain as formerly and, quite properly, they feel that they must prepare to support themselves. The more thoughtful wish to prepare for emergencies and then to let marriage take care of itself. They are not opposed to marrying but they are also unwilling to sit down in unoccupied expectation. They prefer assurance of their economic stability whatever the future may bring.

But economic independence is impossible without health. Life in the business and professional world is exacting. The professions which young women are entering put them under a strain with which their mothers are unacquainted. They compete with men who as boys lived in the open and played the rougher games which gave them the strength needed in life's competitive struggle. The physically weak girl who spends her afternoon on the couch lazily reading the latest novel awaiting the evening dance or social entertainment is not acquiring the physical strength which she will need in the competitive contest of business or professional life.

The young must have social entertainment and only those who are so old-fashioned as to misunderstand the present-day demands will attempt to deny them these pleasures which are a necessary part of the training of character and personality. It is a clear perspective that we are trying to give. The young girl naturally thinks only of to-day. To-morrow has little meaning for her. A year or two later she looks a little farther into the future and begins to think about what she is to do when she leaves the high school or college, but her view still does not take in a great distance. The present continues uppermost in her mind. We cannot expect it to be otherwise. Were it not so she would be a middle-aged woman in her youth. But parents should look farther into the future.

Beyond question, plans should be made to give girls social pleasures. We are training a social being and not a work horse, yet due consideration should also be given to the more serious work in preparation for the future occupation.

We have said that young women are now engaged in economic competition with men. This cannot be repeated too often because of its significance in the training of young girls. We have also said that this economic struggle is in part an outgrowth of the wish of young women to be independent and with some, again, it is a matter of necessity. But whatever its cause, the need of looking ahead and of a little serious thought is clear.

The fragile, delicate type of girl cannot engage successfully in work that requires mental independence. The tendency to baby girls has always been greater than is the case with boys. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that the spoiling process has always been more successful in the case of girls. One reason for this is the training in behavior which boys give one another and which girls, to a large extent, lack.

While, as we have said under another topic, training begins in the cradle, it is nevertheless true that the critical period in the girl's life is between the age of ten and fifteen. Naturally, if she has been humored, petted and coddled from five or six to eight, her case is almost hopeless. The reason for this is that the child has learned her power. She has discovered that she can get what she wishes by a generous flow of tears.

Most parents take thought for to-morrow by locking the stable door after the horse has been stolen. In the preadolescent period when social demands are most numerous and the untrained girl is most thoughtless of the future, the parents suddenly discover that there is no regularity in the occupations of their daughter and that she has acquired the habit of having her own way. Then they are likely to put the pressure on and the nervous tissue already frayed at the edges becomes irritated until it is raw.

A girl who has not learned to adapt herself to conditions which are not those which she would select, one who can not subordinate her desires to the requirements of the situation is not going to make her way in the world to-day. Neither the office of a lawyer or doctor nor a business house is a good place for an exacting, petulant young woman. The girl who has obtained her wishes in the home by whining and crying is not going to adapt herself to situations in which she is merely an individual who is expected to do her work efficiently at the time when it should be done.

Much the same conditions exist for girls who marry. Probably most of the divorces are caused by irritated nerves and by the fact that petulancy characterized the childhood home.

What we are saying is equally true of young men but at the present moment we are thinking of the preparation of girls for the stress and strains of life. In the world's work we cannot expect always to have our own way. There is, of course, a limit to the extent to which one should yield. This brings us again to a reasonable perspective in our outlook on life.

An intelligent view of conditions is a matter of common sense and, contrary to the general opinion, common sense is a matter of training. It is acquired by facing reality instead of trying to evade it by feminine subtleties.

To be sure, inherited intelligence is the foundation of all reasonable behavior, but we are not at present concerned with those who have less than the average mental endowment. We are thinking of the way in which the parents of girls with good ability should view the problem of child training.

Parents are too likely to be influenced by the conveniences of the day. A child cries and is disturbing. The mother has things which she wishes to do. She has not time, or thinks that she has not, to delay in meeting the situation. The easiest thing to do is to yield, and here the trouble begins. The child discovers how to get what it wants. This is the beginning of the neurasthenias of later life when the young woman finds herself up against propositions and people who do not yield to her will.

It is a good thing to stop occasionally and state one's problem. If parents have done this already, and few do, a repetition of the purpose is, nevertheless, valuable. Let us therefore repeat the problem which confronts parents and teachers.

Young women as well as young men must do a little independent thinking to-day if they are going to fit into the conditions of life. We pass over the fact that women now have the vote and that it is up to them to use their franchise intelligently. This is too self-evident to require discussion.

Parents naturally wish to make their girls into self-sufficient, independent, intelligent women with mental poise. We have shown that the first need in achieving this purpose is the health of the girl. We have dealt at some length with the conditions forced upon us to-day which make the problem of health much more complex than formerly. Yet parents must face the facts.

We have spoken of the disinclination of many girls to-day to take the exercise in the open air which health requires. We have called attention to the fact that the style of shoes prevents walking. Other conditions likewise interfere with this. The automobile is so much more pleasant than walking and so much easier. We have also noticed some other fashions which endanger the health, especially of girls. Whatever other disadvantages boys may labor under, they are at least sufficiently clothed.

We have also observed that social demands put a strain upon girls at the time when the requirements of the school are exacting. We might mention, in this connection, that about this time the mother thinks that her girl should take music lessons. It does not matter whether the girl has any special aptitude for music. It is a part of the training of her sex. Hence, to her school and social duties are added several hours a week at the piano. The writer does not wish to be understood as opposing music. The question we are concerned with here is, how much can the girl stand and still build up the strength and vigor which she will require later in life?

We have referred to the neurasthenias which do not reveal themselves during the early period of childhood's vigor and energy. But every physician knows that the foundation of nervous breakdowns is usually laid during the preadolescent and early adolescent period. It is not the school work that makes the trouble. It is the attempt to carry on in more things than are consistent with the growth of muscle and with the stabilization of the nervous system. Joined with this attempt to do too much there exists also in many homes a nervous irritation caused by inconsistencies in the social expectations, requirements, and discipline of the parents.

While the term "inferiority complex" has been greatly abused, it represents a danger that parents and teachers should understand and of which they should continually be mindful. Probably it is one of the reasons why girls still in the freshness of youth decorate their faces with colors which the native Indians would have envied. Believing, rightly or wrongly, that they are not as pretty as they would like to be, many young adolescent girls try to improve on nature with facial tints of marvelous hues. This is one of the ways in which girls try to compensate for the inadequacy of which in some way they have been made half conscious. It is a harmless habit except for the corroding belief that lies behind it. Had these girls red blood instead of "blue," their personal charm would be so greatly enhanced that the need of compensating for fancied facial defects would not be felt.

The feeling of inferiority has many causes which, if they are not produced in the home, might be removed did parents but grasp the situation. Efforts at social climbing with the frequent query, Why were you not invited? are among too frequent causes. Young girls are peculiarly sensitive to real and imagined social slights, and parents should minimize rather than emphasize them.

Among other causes of the feeling of inferiority are the superior attitude of adults and the disparagement of the child by its parents. Not infrequently the unfavorable comparison is made in the presence of visitors. Many times the writer has heard mothers say to callers: "Jane does not succeed in her school. She doesn't seem able to do as well as she should."

In early childhood these remarks and this adult attitude are bad, and probably equally disastrous for both sexes. During early adolescence, however, girls are particularly sensitive. Boys of this age are likely to go away and express their opinion of social comparisons and approval in language that would shock their mothers, but with girls these humiliations strike in and fester. The mental inflammation spreads and the girl may become generally discouraged with herself and with life. According to her nature, she feels unappreciated or incompetent. In any case, the foundation for mental disorder is laid.

The writer knows a woman of forty who comes under the first group. As a child she was frail but could have become strong with outdoor exercise. Instead, she was humored and her illnesses exaggerated. Much of the time nothing was the matter with her except that she wanted to be coddled. By nature, or nurture, she was indolent, and her frailty was an excuse for lack of work. Finally, her failure to accomplish what other girls of her age did "got on her nerves." Instead of developing the feeling of inferiority, however, she began to regard herself as an exceptional girl whom others were incompetent to appreciate. As a matter of fact, she had average ability but, on account of her indolence and defense illnesses, she failed in many of the things she undertook. She barely graduated from the high school and, not doing well in her freshman college year, she withdrew. Her confidence in her superior but unappreciated ability was encouraged by her mother until it became a mental disease. Now she is a pathological mother and wife.

All of this might have been averted by intelligent training. Discipline, in the sense of kind but firm requirements, out-of-door games, which were discouraged by her mother because of her frailty, would have saved her from her worst enemies, namely, the wish to escape from the realities of life and the exaggerated notion about her ability with the accompanying belief that she was unappreciated.

This is one of those rather frequent cases in which a girl is allowed to avoid her duties in the home and school until failure follows. The one of whom we are speaking, knowing that she had ability, ascribed her lack of success to the failure of her teachers to understand her. Her discontentment spread through her life until she had no friends, though, as a young girl, her winning manners brought her many. Now, as a woman, she is a trouble-maker in any group with which she tries to work. The explanation, as she sees it, is always the same—her superior, unappreciated mind.

It must be remembered that youth ends in time and then girls go out among those who have no patience with the personal foibles of others. The effect of the preadolescent petting now reveals itself in mental revolt and emotional explosions. The methods successfully used to escape the realities of life during girlhood no longer work but the effort to reduce the little world about her to her liking continues. Chronic invalidism, caused by the stress and strain of trying and failing, is now the order of the day, with all of the irritations that dissatisfaction and depression produce.

The consequences of these conditions make another vicious circle. The preadolescent girl is often trying to do more than can be accomplished. Social engagements, school studies, music, and other accomplishments make demands that can only be fulfilled at the expense of health. She attempts to evade duties rather than to make an intelligent selection from among the requirements. The effect is usually seen first in her school work, because the belief that one has got one's lesson is an easy error for a child.

Failure is followed by the nervous irritation of disappointment which reacts by further lowering the efficiency of the girl. It is common knowledge that health improves the mental processes. One does better work when the blood is abundantly supplied with red corpuscles than when it is deficient in vitality.

The nervous irritation caused by low grades in the school produces a mental turmoil which reproduces failure. Thus the series repeats itself. Too many activities, failure, nervous excitement, followed, again, by additional failures.

Remember that all this is happening at the time when the nervous structures of the girl should be established and stabilized. She may not break down at this period, though many do, but the strain has much the same effect as constant irritation of a wound. The healing process is delayed. The vicious circle runs its merry whirl first with the failure that follows the attempt to do the impossible, then the nervous strain that failure produces and afterward continued failure because the nervous irritation prevents the girl from accomplishing what her ability warrants.

Self-depreciation frequently enters here. The inferiority complex portrays in many cases an unfortunate fact. The girl's confidence in herself drops. She begins to think that she lacks ability; she loses ambition, leaves school, and this conviction of inferiority creates a general discontentment which adds to the disastrous effect of the vicious circle of her life. It is of immense importance that girls during this preadolescent period begin to find themselves. They should not undertake more than they can accomplish lest the belief in their lack of ability become a fixed emotional attitude.

We have shown the importance of a healthy outdoor life at the time when the vigor of the nervous structures is being finally settled and when the general vitality of the girl is being determined for her entire life. Next to the common cold, according to Dr. Myerson, the psychoneuroses are the most common of human ills, and "they add heavily to the sum total of human unhappiness."

We have also said that emotional states are taking form at this time. The girl is likely to acquire too little or too much confidence in herself. In the former case the inferiority complex develops and in the second the characteristics of the "bluffer" appear.

If mental poise is ever to be attained, it should begin to take form during this preadolescent period, and mental poise is immensely important in adults. It distinguishes the "sane" from the flighty, the moody or temperamental from the dependable, the reasonable from the unreasonable, and the companionable person from the unsocial. Poise is tremendously significant for an efficient life because without happiness there is no efficiency and without poise there is no happiness.

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CHAPTER XIII

INSTINCTS

THE notion of instinct has been under fire lately, and for good reason since it has become a blanket term for so many activities that the effect of learning was obscured. Even before the question reached the stage of acute discussion, however, it was known that there is no psychic force or impulse which may be called an instinct. James, indeed, who wrote as far back as 1890, emphasized this when he gave his provisional list of twenty-eight human instincts. "With the boundaries of instinct fading into reflex action below," he wrote, "and into acquired habit or suggested activity above, it is likely that there will always be controversy about what to include under the class-name." [1]

The recent discussion, again, has not clarified the question as much as one might hope. Watson, for example, one of the most vigorous opponents of instincts and who explicitly denies heredity, uses qualifying words to which much or little significance may be attached according to one's preference. Brief quotations, with the qualifying words italicized, will show this.

Watson does not need instincts. They are the result "largely" of training.[2]

"There are then for us no instincts—we no longer need the term in psychology. Everything we have been in the habit of calling an 'instinct' to-day is a result *largely* of training—belonging to man's learned behavior."[3]

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[1] William James, *Principles of Psychology* (Holt), Vol. II, p. 440.

[2] John B. Watson, *Pedagogical Seminary and Journal of Genetic Psychology*, Vol. 32, p. 293.

"Actual observation thus makes it impossible for us any longer to entertain the concept of instinct. We have seen that every act has a *genetic history*."[4] But "largely" and "genetic history" mean much or little.

One fact seems to stand out conspicuously and that is that certain kinds of behavior are easily conditioned in young children. Curiosity, for instance, is readily aroused, and if we will not be accused of anthropomorphism, we may call attention to the evidence for it in anthropoid apes. What lies behind this curiosity, which makes it possible easily to cultivate it and nourish it into scientific interest so that its final form is, to quote Watson, "largely," but not wholly, the "result of training," we do not attempt to say.

With this brief reference to the controversy, we will proceed to the discussion of certain childish traits which seem to be awaiting the conditioning or learning influence of those who rear or educate children. If we, at times, use the word "instinct" we beg not to be understood to mean a single psychic force. Whatever instinct may be, it is not, as McDougall would have us believe, a "native or inborn capacity for purposive action."[5] At most, it is an urge, a tendency, upon which learning and habits of behavior may be built. The urge may be ignored in early childhood, whereupon it fades and, finally, disappears. Were it a definite psychic force, it could be aroused to action at any time, whereas we find that curiosity, if not encouraged during early childhood, cannot be made a part of the mental equipment in the adolescent.

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[3] *Ibid.*

[4] John B. Watson, *Behaviorism* (People's Institute), p. 104.

[5] William McDougall, *Outlines of Psychology* (Scribner), p. 57.

The present writer can hardly be called a "medieval psychologist" if he quotes, without disapproval, from Watson.

"We should define instinct as an hereditary pattern reaction, the separate elements of which are movements principally of the striped muscles. It might otherwise be expressed as a combination of explicit congenital responses unfolding serially under appropriate stimulation." [6]

That is closer to the old, objectionable view of instincts than we should think it "safe" to go were it not the definition of one who has washed himself clean of "medieval psychology" and become a conspicuous leader of the "modernists." Instinct, "an hereditary pattern reaction, the separate elements of which are movements principally [but not wholly or always] of the striped muscles"—"a combination of explicit congenital responses unfolding serially under appropriate stimulation"! What more could one ask who believes instinct to be "the faculty of acting in such a way as to produce certain ends, without foresight of the ends, and without previous education in the performance"? Not believing in such a "faculty" we pass on, but we cannot help wondering at the gyrations of which human cortical cells, at times, are capable.

Instincts, then, as we shall regard them, are an unrest—an uneasiness—at times or under certain conditions, which may be partially, or perhaps wholly, removed in several ways but which is especially amenable to one kind of stimulus. The gregarious "instinct" is a good illustration. It brings children together and thus gives an opportunity for conditioning or acquiring many habits of behavior which are not provided for in the instinct. The unrest, loneliness, of children when by themselves may be partially, and perhaps completely, relieved by the company of a dog. This, however, does not give the social training provided by other children. Knowledge of the "instincts" of childhood and thoughtful provision of the most suitable environment not only to satisfy the urge and relieve the restlessness but also to use the "instinct" for mental and social growth is important.

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[6] John B. Watson, *Psychology from the Standpoint of a Behaviorist* (Lippincott), pp. 252-253.

Perhaps the most obvious instinct, the one at any rate which those engaged in the training of boys will not deny, is his tendency to fight. Moralists are inclined to class the fighting instinct as definitely bad. Many of them, even to-day, would be glad to eradicate it from boy nature. But this cannot be done. It is doubtful whether, were it possible, it would be wise.

Rage, or anger, is one of the three instinctive emotions which Watson found in his study of young infants. Regardless of whether the three that he discovered complete the list, we may assume that anger is instinctive and is, therefore, firmly fixed in the race. Any thwarting of the purpose of a child is likely to arouse this emotion. We cannot hope to eliminate it. The problem, therefore, is to use what has come to be known as sublimation, namely, the redirection of this instinctive response into developmental and ultimately social channels.

Fighting merely because of personal rivalry is quite different from fighting in self-defense or to protect another who is weaker than the one who is attacking. The first cannot be defended but the second promotes manly qualities.

During the early years of boyhood fighting is almost as natural as eating. Only the physically anemic lose their appetite and it is those also who are mentally anemic who do not fight.

We are not advocating fighting as a principle of behavior. We mean that there is a limit of aggression and oppression at which boys of promise draw the line. Beyond that line they fight.

Children who are too submissive to abuse from their associates are likely to develop the inferiority complex if they do not become cowards. Successful resistance to unjustifiable encroachment on one's rights and privileges often has a far-reaching effect on the ability and moral fiber of the boy. Contrary to the opinion of many, this influence, if it does not develop into bullying, is frequently beneficial.

A well-authenticated story is told of Newton's boyhood. As the tale runs, at about ten years of age he was timid and submissive among his fellows, and well toward the lower end of his class. He was "good meat" for one of the bullies who was too much of a coward to attack those of his own strength and vigor. But one day this abuse reached and passed the limit. Even the meek, timid Newton could stand no more. He sprang at his tormentor with unexpected fury. It so happened that just at that moment the head master of the school was passing along the path on the other side of a high hedge. He observed the fight and, with the wisdom occasionally shown by schoolmasters, he turned aside and disappeared that he might not see what was going on.

The master had long had his eye on young Newton. He believed that he possessed good ability but lacked confidence in himself because he submitted too completely to the domineering abuse of the stronger boys in his class. In this schoolmaster's opinion this promising boy needed above all things to gain confidence in himself.

Young Newton did an admirable job. He pounded the face of his tormentor until it was in suitable condition to rub into the sand. Having done a satisfactory piece of work he let him get up, but stood by ready to repeat the dose if it were necessary. The bully, however, was satisfied with his treatment and, like all cowards, sneaked away to escape the jeers of his associates.

The final outcome vindicated the head master's judgment. Newton found himself. From that time he was not only a respected boy among his companions but he also respected himself, and his scholarship improved rapidly until he led his class.

Fighting for the mere sake of fighting is, of course, bad. But submission to intimidation is worse. The effect of the first may be eliminated as the boy grows older but the latter leaves a mental and emotional impress from which the boy may suffer throughout his life.

So far as training in this matter is concerned, boys should be taught that bullying is unmanly and cowardly. But if it is found that they are yielding too regularly and continuously to aggression, that they are weak and vacillating under the abuse of their associates, they should be encouraged to stand for their rights.

Many times it is better that a boy fight and be whipped than not to fight at all. He has, at least, shown his courageous intentions and he respects himself more than if he had yielded without the attempt to maintain his rights. The purpose of training, so far as this instinct is concerned, is to develop an independent, courageous attitude which respects both the rights of others and preserves one's own self-esteem.

In the larger outside world, courage to defend one's ideas and ideals is needed. Naturally, this defense is not a matter of fists. But it does require the independent vigor and resistance that is acquired in standing for one's rights in boyhood.

The story that Wellington prepared to win the battle of Waterloo on the playground of an English public school is not true if taken literally. But Wellington, as a boy, could not have been one of those weak sisters who submitted meekly to the indignities and impositions of his associates. Psychology enables us to make certain pretty definite statements regarding the boyhood of men who display vigor, perseverance and courage. If Wellington during his childhood had been a gentle, "sweet" boy, if he had been one of those who are always "well-behaved," who never violate rules or get angry when his rights are infringed upon, it is quite certain that he would never have had the chance either to win or lose the battle of Waterloo.

Boys should be taught to fight only when they are attacked or in the defense of a weaker boy or girl. They should be taught to see that aggression is unmanly and that bullying is cowardly. They should not, however, be led to believe that meekness in the face of attack is the attitude which is approved in the home.

If parents are close enough to their children to be in their confidence, they will know about the things that occur on the playground. With this knowledge they can talk with their boys about the troubles of the day. In such a home, if a boy has been abused he will frankly tell his father. Parents should remember, however, that children are not likely to state facts which are to their own disadvantage. Too commonly fathers and mothers assume at once that their boy or girl is right. Their task at such a time is that of the family physician whose business it is to find out everything that is disturbing his patient, for the purpose of setting him right mentally and emotionally.

Children are likely to assume personal rights which conflict with those of their associates. They have not yet learned that disagreement and strife are often the result of jealousies and aggressions—of claims which transgress the rights of others.

Parents naturally wish their children to be independent and to stand for what they think is just. Cowards and those with the inferiority complex never do this. They yield because they are afraid to assert their independence, and this sort of boy or girl develops into a timid and perhaps emotionally unbalanced man or woman. The problem of the fighting instinct is, therefore, not its elimination but rather the development from it of an independent character willing to stand against attacks and to defend those principles which are believed to be worthy of support. In this way the fighting instinct serves its purpose in modern society. Let us now pass to another characteristic common to childhood.

Children want to build things, and abundant opportunity should be given them for the development of this native tendency. This is one of the ways in which the imagination is trained and it supplies the raw material for thinking out problems. One learns to deal with situations by meeting them, and childhood is the period when one can learn from experience without the disasters that come with failure later in life.

Successful adaptation also grows out of coöperative companionship in constructive work. If a man or woman cannot meet others on their own ground and oppose their projects without awakening hatred, the situation is serious. Childhood and adolescence are the time when this ability is acquired without the unfortunate results that attend incompetence later in life. These are by-products, so to speak, of the urge to create and to build what one's productive imagination has conceived. But other characteristics, whether instinctive or not, emerge at certain periods of childhood. Some of these have been lost sight of in the recent unfortunate formalization of child study.

Children, in the beginning, are interested in gaining knowledge. This interest continues until it is checked either by lack of an encouraging environment or because of the rigid monotony of the method used in the home and school.

But parents who are not themselves interested in acquiring knowledge cannot promote this interest in their children. This desire for knowledge, which is a by-product of curiosity, is instinctive in the sense that it is a natural tendency that all boys and girls have until it languishes and dies for want of nutriment which is as essential to inborn tendencies as to the growth of the body.

"Nascent interests" were emphasized by G. Stanley Hall and his students. Unfortunately, the term has largely dropped out of use in educational psychology. Understood in the light of present knowledge, it is valuable for parents and teachers. It means that some interests can be more readily and effectively conditioned at certain ages than at other periods. Not a few "interests" appear soon after birth. Curiosity, of which we have already spoken, is an illustration. Watch the child and see that "temptations" are at hand should be the motto. In this case it is not merely strike while the iron is hot, but strike when it begins to get warm; and keep fuel—enticing incentives—ready.

The lower animals are notoriously curious. A dog wants to smell of everything that comes his way. Monkeys and anthropoid apes examine with uncanny interest the objects in their environment. Primitive men have the same curiosity but they exhibit it in different ways. Among other things, they want to know about the beneficent and destructive natural forces, and the explanations which they have invented constitute long chapters in anthropology.

In the case of modern children, this curiosity begins in the cradle and does not end until it has been suffocated by the indifference in the home or by the academic dreariness of the schools. It goes without saying that this native curiosity should be made the basis of mental development. The form which it will take will vary with the age of the child. It should not be forced but should be encouraged when it appears.

Collecting is one of the many forms in which this curiosity shows itself. The variety of things which children collect at different ages seems to adults motiveless and useless but, as a matter of fact, nothing in the life of the child is without meaning. Even objects most grotesque from the adult point of view may be made the starting point for interest in gathering knowledge about the nature, sources, and human factors connected with the objects which the boy or girl gathers.

Postage stamps are one of the many things which are collected. This hobby, of course, gives an excellent opportunity for imparting information about the countries represented by the different stamps and for arousing interest in learning something about the state of civilization, mode of life, national peculiarities and other human characteristics. We have said many times, and it cannot be repeated too often, that the information which is given indirectly is most effective. The important thing is to watch for the appearance of an interest and then to carry it on through all of its possible and devious ways.

Interests appear in children at varying ages and, under the right conditions, run their normal course until they yield to the attractions offered by succeeding years. Each interest is an opportunity for development which should not be neglected. Many of these enthusiasms, such as interest in insects and other natural objects, may be made permanent, and in mature years they will give pleasure to the man or woman for whom life otherwise would be only a drab existence.

The chief purpose, however, of utilizing these instincts is the mental development of the boy and girl. We wish, for example, to teach children to think. Where are we going to get our raw material? Parents and teachers are always wondering how to teach their children to reason, and childhood's interests, as they appear from year to year, offer a solution of the problem. What is the explanation of the remarkable performances of ants, bees, and wasps? What do they do and why do they do it? The curious and remarkably efficient division of labor which these insects display is a field big enough in itself for many problems in which children can romp with keen intellectual delight.

Questions of immense importance which include the higher animals and finally involve the life of man may be raised by observation and study of insects. What are instincts, for example? Are they invariable in these lower forms of life? Does man also have them? If so, to what extent are they altered in human beings?

It is not our purpose to cover the field of interests during childhood and adolescence. We are concerned rather with illustrating their importance and showing the way in which they may be utilized. One interest, however, has such immense significance in the development of children and, like all enthusiasms, is so easily killed that it deserves special attention. We refer to the interest in reading. It hardly need be said that reading is not an instinct but it is one means of gratifying curiosity which certainly is an instinct if man has any.

Many studies have been made on the reading interests of children and adolescents. These investigations were stimulated originally by G. Stanley Hall and by those who directly or indirectly came under his influence.

One investigation of two thousand children—from the third to the twelfth grade inclusive—showed that those of the third grade read an average of nearly five books in six months. In the fourth and fifth grades the average fell, but rose again to over six books in the same period of time in the seventh grade, and then dropped rather rapidly to three books toward the end of the high school course.

According to this investigation, the girls read more than the boys, and they reached their average maximum somewhat earlier. Stories of adventure, especially war stories, as might be expected, were popular with the boys. From the third grade through the seventh and eighth we have what, for want of a better name, may be called the "heroic period." Biography, travel, and exploration show up well in the reading interest of these children until the ninth or tenth grade. Girls around the sixth grade were found to enjoy stories of adventure, and descriptions of travel held a high place into and through the high school period.

Biography was popular with girls but, in the high school, lives of great women were sought more than those of men. The highest point of the reading curve was reached between the sixth and eighth grades.

A second investigation of nearly three thousand children, from nine years of age to fifteen, also showed a gradual increase in the number of books read. The greatest interest for travel and adventure was found to be at about thirteen years of age and this was particularly marked in the case of the boys.

Still another study of the reading interest of about five thousand children, from the fourth to the ninth grade, indicated a noticeable increase at about twelve years of age. At this period, according to G. Stanley Hall, "there is often a veritable reading craze. . . . The reading hunger in many children becomes insatiable and is often quite indiscriminate." This craze for reading begins around twelve years of age and, with opportunity, may continue for three or four years.

Boys were found to read much more history and travel than girls, while with the latter poetry was more absorbing. Investigation of the number of books drawn from libraries by about twelve hundred children verified these results but indicated that the reading interest continues somewhat longer than the other investigations had shown. At all ages girls read more fiction than boys, and the interest in these books increases markedly at adolescence. Juvenile stories hold boys until the fifteenth year or later.

Approximately three times as many boys as girls selected books because they were full of adventure. The books and stories called exciting by girls were found to be tame when compared with those which the boys preferred. Boys want thrilling incidents and heroes.

One rather interesting fact was brought out in some of these investigations and that is that while none of the boys was willing to confess enjoyment of "girls' stories," girls quite frequently said that they liked tales of adventure of the type preferred by boys. This indicates, as we have suggested in our reference to gangs, that some and perhaps many of the so-called secondary sex traits may not be definitely sex characteristics but may be caused by the environment in which the girls happen to find themselves. Girls, again, select books that deal with children. Boys may also like such books but the children must be boys of their own age, and their interest centers rather in the activities of the boys than in the more commonplace narrations which seem to satisfy girls.

It is quite clear that the curve of reading interest is greatly affected by the presence or absence of library facilities and by the books in the home. Further, in the investigations which we have mentioned, 75 per cent of the boys and girls want to talk with some one about what they are reading.

Several of the studies indicated that children are inclined to read what some one recommends to them. This reliance on recommendation was more pronounced in girls than in boys.

Parents certainly do not appreciate the tremendous importance of convenient facilities during this reading period. If desirable books are hard to get and undesirable ones easy, there is no question about which will be chosen. The mere fact that children can get books if they wish to go to the trouble does not meet the situation. "No one," not even a child, "wants to go to unnecessary trouble." We have quoted this wise observation of Rousseau in another connection but it is worth repeating here.

We have been speaking of tendencies that appear in children during the course of development. Whether these tendencies are instincts or not is immaterial. They are at least connected with and grow out of an eager, perhaps vague, desire for something—something quite likely not clearly defined but which may be satisfied in ways that promote mental growth. Reading has been taken as a sample. Probably the desire to read which characterizes children unless it is suppressed by the environment, is one manifestation of the general desire for information about what is going on around them. A young child wants to know what makes the wheels of his universe go round. The whole life of young children is a huge question mark and when they reach the reading age they become vaguely conscious that books will give them answers to the questions which are puzzling them.

Other factors we have found play their rôle in this reading drama—interest in adventure, in the early discoveries and explorers. We have also seen that it is the time of hero worship in both girls and boys. What then, is the function of these childhood tendencies and how are we to know when they will appear?

Their function is the part which they play in the general development of children. It is a commonplace statement to say that the mind develops by use. Whatever the native ability may be, its subsequent growth will depend upon the opportunities offered for its exercise. Here again we come once more to the environment. If it is enticing for inquiries about scientific matters suited to the age of the children, questions will be asked and an answer to them will be desired. But, though every boy and girl passes through a period of what may be called scientific interest, the questions will quickly cease to be asked if there is no inducement.

The scientific interest, in one way or another, is present from an early age but it becomes more specific at about the twelfth year. From that time on it rises rapidly if allurements are at hand. Many boys want to set up a laboratory for physics or chemistry in their rooms. They are interested in discoveries in astronomy. They want an explanation of the tricks of conjurers and some of these youngsters become remarkably proficient in sleight-of-hand performances. But without encouragement the interest wanes.

The scientific interest is tremendously significant in the development of boys and girls regardless of whether or not they are to become scientists. The development of the "scientific craze" is as important a feature of their mental growth if they are to enter business or become lawyers, as if they are to earn their living by scientific work. The answer to the second part of the question, namely, how are we to know when these tendencies appear, is that we do not know until we observe them; and they will not be observed unless the environment is alluring, for the simple reason that they will not reveal themselves.

The educational answer, then, to the question, how are we to know when these native tendencies appear, is that opportunities should be lying around, so to speak, at the time when they may reasonably be expected. This means inducements to read suitable books, temptations to observe and study science and natural history, and incentives to construct the things in which boys and girls of a certain age may be expected to be interested. We are thinking now of such things as radios, miniature aëroplanes and other objects that fascinate children. All of this work trains the imagination, the ability to reason, and the hand. It is also one method of developing the brain, for, as is well known, hand and arm training is the means of helping weak-minded children; and what is good for developing the brain of the feeble-minded is the psychological method for normal boys and girls.

We can only reach the brain through outside stimulation.

Development is the result of reaction to external situations. Suitable stimuli should, therefore, be provided by parents and teachers in the hope that children may take advantage of them.

The reading craze, which we have used as an illustration, springs from the interest of youngsters in human adventures and from their desire to find the answer to questions which have arisen in their minds because of some factor in the environment. It may be that the children have heard something about the remarkable adventures of Paul Jones, but they will not go to much trouble to find books to satisfy their curiosity. Desires of this sort are very temporary and transient. They are quickly forgotten if the means of getting the information is not conveniently at hand. This is the case with adults. Why should it be less so with children?

Books suitable to the age of the children, as we have said, should be lying around. If a question about Copernicus, Galileo, Thomas Huxley, Benjamin Franklin, Darwin, or any other man or event is asked, it is the parents and teachers who should go to the trouble of getting the right book from the library. Children will not do it. It is too much work and meanwhile something else has attracted their attention.

In summarizing this brief discussion, tendencies to do things which will be advantageous for the development of the child appear at varying ages. If the moment is not utilized, the interest evaporates, and one factor in the development of the boy or girl has been lost. We cannot say definitely when these tendencies will appear, since they come only under enticing conditions. They are coy and need to be coaxed. This is what makes the home and school environment so tremendously important. Inducements should be at hand. If the child does not avail himself of them to-day, he will to-morrow.

Sometimes a word casually dropped, or a question asked, will start things going, and then a momentary reference to the book which has been thoughtfully provided for the occasion will be the match that starts the blaze in the mind of the boy or girl. Instinctive tendencies cannot with safety be ignored. If the child does not have a chance to get interested in the right sort of things, he will get interested in those of another kind. Thrills we know they are going to have, but the search for thrills is only one of the natural urges. When opportunities are not furnished, the quest becomes the pathway of young adolescents gone wrong.

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CHAPTER XIV

EMOTIONS

QUITE likely Watson is right when he says that there are only three native emotions—fear, rage, and love. There are, however, many tendencies to emotional reactions which are of the utmost importance in the training of children.

The writer has in his classes at the present time two girls, each of whom is the victim of the emotional instability of the mother. The two cases are wholly different. One is going to pieces because of constant nagging. Her emotional balance is so seriously disturbed that it was necessary that she be taken from her home and given a room in the college dormitory. The second case is characterized by shyness and timidity which in a girl of twenty-one is definitely pathological. This young woman has never since early childhood been allowed to make her own decisions or to have friends among her boy and girl associates. She frankly said in a recent conversation that she has no friends and does not know how to make them. She goes to parties and sits apart from the others, uncertain what to do, and feeling that she is an object of pity.

A recent book, entitled *Why Men Fail,*[1] is chiefly concerned with emotional instability of one sort or another. Many young men and women fail in business, or are unable to make their home successful, because their parents could train only failures. Resentment against authority, a sullen attitude, self-depreciation or over self-confidence, lack of perseverance or inability to coöperate, are rather common. All of these unfortunate conditions are caused primarily by emotional instability. At best, we are more often controlled by our emotions than by our reason.

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[1] By Dr. Morris Fishbein.

Emotion is the pushing, driving force but its power should be well balanced and controlled. Energy that runs loose and wild is likely to be destructive. This is as true of man as of automobiles, and the compulsive force of an emotion is terrific.

When properly adjusted in the personality, emotions become an immensely valuable asset, but when badly integrated, maladjustment of one sort or another is bound to occur. Unfortunately, emotional discord cannot easily be remedied after maturity has been reached. Even those as young as college students usually find it practically impossible to overcome the emotional defects which they acquired in childhood.

Some fail to take a wholesome interest in the human beings about them. They are irritated by suggestions from their associates and by the advice of those in authority above them.

One boy, whom the writer knew, was close to the head of his class in the high school. His native ability caused him to be petted in his home, and in school his success without much work gave him the notion that he was so superior to others of his age that they should always carry out his wishes. He was so domineering among his associates that he practically became a social outcast. At first this did not worry him because he was convinced of his superiority. Finally, however, he began to feel his isolation, yet he did not know the cause. After graduation he secured a good position but continued to give the impression to those with whom he came in contact that he was a superior being, especially endowed by the Creator.

This led to the same isolation among his business associates that had troubled him in his later high school and college years. Hence, when verbal orders were passed along he was ignored because his coworkers were not interested in him. Finally, as a consequence, he was dismissed for neglect of duties and the cause was that he had not known what was expected of him.

The writer inclines to the view that most of the failures of young men and women in business and in the home have emotional rather than intellectual causes. He has come to this opinion by observing large numbers of those who have been his students in the college and university.

The great majority of boys and girls have neither superior nor inferior ability. They are what we call the average. Among these, then, failure or success must lie elsewhere than in the intellect and this is another reason for believing that the emotions are finally the determining factor in producing that delicate balance which we call social adjustment.

Every one knows "queer" people. Indeed, each individual, probably, is willing to admit that every one else is queer and, as one looks over the oddities among one's friends, the interesting discovery is made that the queerness is rarely a question of ability. It is usually an emotional twist of one sort or another.

This is a tremendously important fact for the training of children. Why is it that there are so many men and women with emotional quirks? Only one explanation can be given. We pass over the inherited queernesses. As a matter of fact, most of these people ultimately land in an asylum. The "queer" people who are running around loose are the ones in whom we are interested. What, then, is the answer to the question which we have just asked? The cause is the training which was received in the home, where, in many cases, one or both of the parents have peculiarities which disturb the normal emotional development of their children.

The administrators of the Boston public schools, impressed with the importance of educating the emotions as well as the intellect of school children, planned a survey of the serious emotional defects of the pupils in the schools.

Questions for the guidance of the teachers were prepared and reports of suggestive cases were requested. Twenty-eight sample cases of problem behavior, each with an emotional basis, are given in the published results of the survey.[2] Space permits only a brief sketch of the disturbing emotional conditions which produced behavior problems. That the general scope of the survey may be seen some of the questions asked of the teachers are given below:

What are some of the reasons why a child keeps apart from other children?

What are some of the devices (desirable or undesirable) employed by children to gain notice?

Are some children subject to conditions which breed in them timidity and consequently undermine initiative? What are some of these conditions? How have you led a child suffering from excessive timidity to self-confidence and initiative?

Do children imitatively reflect the mood of those at home? Have you recognized such imitation in a pupil? How have you dealt with it?

How do various children act in the face of failure or thwarting? Separately consider such tendencies as resigning one's self with good or bad excuse, blaming others, building air castles, picking quarrels.

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[2] Boston Public Schools, *School Document*, 1927, No. 2.

Do you believe that children are ever aided by an opportunity freely to tell a teacher about their feelings?

Do some children rather unconsciously and subtly fit their reasons to their desires?

Of what do you find children sensitive? How have you helped some sensitive child?

How have you dealt with a pupil who tended to be a bully?

Looking through the cases reported, we find the following emotional defects conspicuous. They had been either cultivated in the home or allowed to develop through inattention; and all were "cured" by thoughtful treatment by the teachers. We will merely sketch the defects. The details may be obtained from the document by those teachers who are sufficiently interested.

A clever little girl told "dreadful lies" as a result of day-dreaming; a girl of fourteen, large for her age, who wanted to be a "movie star," dozed in her chair or admired herself in a mirror; a girl of sixteen, with a good intelligence quotient, was poor in all of her studies and especially low in English. She spent her time "dreaming" and, when sympathetically questioned, her dreams were found to be about becoming a successful writer. This case, of course, was easy. The "treatment" was clear when once the correct diagnosis was made. A small boy retreated within himself. He paid no attention to his schoolmates. His father, "a huge, formidable looking man with a gruff voice," was not unkind, but he never took any notice of his children except to tell them "to get out of the way." The mother of a small, timid girl "had standards too high for a small child." The result was nervous excitability, failure in school, then tears, followed by more intense excitability with repetition of the disturbing series of actions.

A girl in the sixth grade "couldn't see objects a few feet away." Realizing that she was a subject of solicitude by teacher and parents, "her head moved like one stricken by palsy." Examination by eye specialists showed that her vision was normal and that her trouble was largely emotional. Meanwhile a speech impediment had developed. Knowledge of the cause indicated the treatment in the school, and the cure was rapid. A sullen, defiant boy of nine was so ready to fight that "all the teachers had turned against him and 'were relieved' when he was transferred." A "pugnacious, daydreaming, saucy, and inattentive" boy of eight was cured when his teacher made friends with him and induced him to tell his story. An overconfident, "conceited" boy of ten with unusual ability was made to understand his good points and his faults when his teacher had the children write a coöperative letter about each child "from the teacher to each boy's father." A beginning was made with "a sample letter" about this offensively conceited boy. The youngster smiled with pride as his good points were enumerated but became more and more thoughtful as the faults observed by his schoolmates accumulated. The cure was complete.

A girl of fifteen who, for six months had been "a willing, earnest and intelligent pupil," suddenly became willfully disobedient and, when asked for an explanation, "she suddenly slumped to the floor." Her red cheeks led the teacher to suspect a "feint" instead of a "faint," and so it proved. She had these "spells" at home when they were needed as a means of getting what she wanted.

These are typical cases of beginning abnormalities started in the home and nurtured in the school until the survey showed the teachers the significance of emotional disturbances in the personality of boys and girls, and led them to study behavior problems as indications of some underlying, curable cause rather than as isolated misdemeanors to be dealt with, and perhaps punished, according to the ancient pedagogical fashion. These teachers, after the survey, became physicians to personalities that were being disfigured in the homes. They realized as never before that they were training human beings instead of teaching boys and girls the subjects of the curriculum. Personalities threatened with permanent deformity were rebuilt by observant teachers before the injury had become chronic.

The environmental conditions that were distorting the growth of these children were various. In some homes excessive, uninformed severity was found, in others overindulgence, but in no instance was there intelligent knowledge of children's ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving. None of the parents was aware that personalities were being made by the conditioning influences of the home.

Often, the father, irritated by business perplexities, does not understand his children. Obedience by a "word or look" is his motto, and the mother, trying to counteract his unintentional severity, falls into the opposite error of overindulgence. Here is the teacher's chance to train parents as understudies in a new and significant educational play—the functions and regulation of the emotions for the development of a healthy personality. But if teachers are to direct the cast they themselves must be skilled in the perplexing byways of mental hygiene.

To say that the home should be a peaceful place is trite, but it is not so commonplace to add that there should be a well-balanced, calm, emotional atmosphere. Let us repeat that if parents must differ about the management of their children or dispute—and probably it is too much to expect that there will be no disagreement—quarreling should not go on in the presence of the children. Matters of difference should be ironed out in seclusion. It is doubtful if any other one condition is more productive of undesirable emotions in children than to live amid almost continuous parental wrangling. Besides the nervous irritation caused by rasping frays, the contradiction between the behavior of their parents in the home and their social sweetness when with others starts emotional disturbances which are almost certain to end disastrously.

One of the writer's students remarked only a few days ago that it is unfortunate that children cannot have sabbatical years away from home. This girl is at present studying abnormal psychology and from what she said it is quite evident that her home was furnishing an undesirable laboratory for a study of typical cases.

The human mind is not a blank sheet of paper upon which experience writes. There are, of course, many children who inherit frail constitutions without the resistance which others have. These children are constitutionally prepared for what we may call an emotional infection of instability. If social jealousies are the chief subjects of conversation in the home, the boys and girls are almost certain to be infected with suspicion and with what has been called the fixation of infantilism. Infantilism means that adults so afflicted have never grown up. They are mature in years but childish and even babyish in their actions.

In such cases the motives and impulses of childhood dominate those who have reached chronological years of maturity. Jealousy and nagging, for example, are childish qualities.

The need of support again is not a mature characteristic. Adults should be independent and be guided in their actions by the best reasons which they can discover. Yet many are helpless until advised—an exhibition of infantilism—and others are controlled by their emotions, which is also a reversion to childish ways of behaving.

It is interesting that some mothers who have no independence themselves, force their daughters to depend upon them. This is probably a phase of compensation; vaguely conscious of their own weakness and fearful lest it may be discovered, they protect their self-respect by dominating their children.

Boys usually will not stand for this. Though they may not consciously lose their respect for their mother, they break away completely from control. With a nervous mother this increases the emotional instability because of the constant irritation caused by her inability to dominate.

Girls cannot separate themselves so completely from their mothers. While they are still in school much of their studying must be done at home and, since few city apartments have rooms where the girls can work by themselves, they are continually subject to the emotional outbursts of the mother who is worn out by the strain of combining household duties with social pleasures.

The advantage of the automobile in affording relaxation and the benefit of outdoor air has also brought with it serious disadvantages. Many who cannot afford the luxury feel that their social position requires this evidence of prosperity. So the constant effort to meet the expenses of the household while supporting the automobile corrodes the nervous fiber of the father who finds a ready outlet for his irritation in the home.

In addition to this, these families are kept continually "on the jump," trying to combine a profitable use of their car with other social and family activities. Naturally there is no use in having an automobile if you do not use it. Consequently, these people are much like those who, having ordered a dinner, feel that they must eat it, regardless of the consequences to their stomach.

The girl, perhaps constitutionally frail, is thus kept in a state of nervous excitement, trying in her unintelligent way to meet the demands of school between social dashes in the car. The automobile psychosis has been overlooked in cataloguing the mental disorders of the home. Fishbein's *Why Men Fail* has chapters on neurotic women: "Parents of Failures," "Home-Made Failures," and "Wives Who Help Their Husbands to Fail," are suggestive titles. In all of these cases the women, if they have children, are also helping them to fail.

We have said that success, in the better sense, is not always a question of intellectual ability. It has been emphasized that the great mass of the people have only average intelligence, no more and no less. What they accomplish will depend, to a large extent, upon their emotional equipment. Often, and especially with girls, the emotions overflow and drown the intellect.

Let us describe a particular kind of girl which a college teacher frequently notices. We may take, as an example, one whom the writer has been recently observing.

This girl bounces into the classroom with her arms filled with books and exclaims: "Oh, I've got so much to do that I just don't know where to begin. I had to go to the theater last night. I didn't want to go, but my mother got up a party and of course I couldn't refuse. I got home late and I had not looked at my lessons, but I sat down and worked real hard for an hour. I think I know most of the things the author is trying to say but you know I don't believe the James-Lange theory of the emotions. It's awfully interesting, though, isn't it—this idea of being frightened because you run? Then if you are scared stiff and can't run you won't be frightened, will you? I believe that if I'd meet a highwayman I'd just get scared and run. May I be excused from class a little early to-day? You know it's just about Christmas time and I must go to town and buy some presents. I found the most exquisite store where they have the sweetest things that I've seen. Just what I want to get for my mother and girl friends."

It will be observed that everything which this girl says is exaggerated and explosive. She dashes from one thought to another, in a constant state of excitement. She has abundant energy but no control. She is always planning more than she can accomplish. Her grades in the various subjects which she has been studying are just below passing or on the border line. She never plans ahead, but puts tremendous and expensive energy into her work at the last minute. She is always hurrying and expects to do in fifteen minutes the work that should require two hours of thoughtful study. To a certain extent she succeeds, because she is bright. She has good intentions, means to carry through what she undertakes but she has no stability. Her emotions are explosive. She talks whenever she has a chance, and never fails to answer a general question put to the class. Sometimes what she says has sense, but more often it is nonsense cleverly put.

These people have enormous energy but they exhaust themselves with the many things which they try to do. They are usually entertaining and, therefore, have many social invitations. But they are wearing out their physical and psychic energy at the time when emotional stability should be established.

In healthy children, energy, both bodily and psychical, is at high tension. If this is not the case, something is the matter with the child. But in those like the girl whom we have just described, relief from high tension is, as physicians say, indicated by the diagnosis. They are like an engine running at an enormous, unregulated rate, and breaking down by the mere wear and tear of its maladjusted parts.

The home, of course, is the place where this condition should be observed and restrained. The trouble, however, usually is that it is only a reflex response to the home conditions to which the girl is automatically reacting. When one observes a young adolescent in this continual state of emotional excitability, inquiry will commonly discover a mother or father who is never relaxed. The girl is thus seen to be only a small edition of parents who are never in repose.

Enthusiasm in children is desirable and it should not be smothered, but in every well-ordered home there should be restful periods. The tone and quality of the voice, as we have said before, are important here. Probably there is no one thing as rasping on fragile nerves as a loud, shrill, or excited voice. Neither is there anything more healing than a quiet, well-modulated tone.

Energy, let us repeat, is at high tension in children, but at first it is only directed momentarily to the accomplishment of some desire. The physical activity of young children is more or less aimless. They run, and jump, and engage in sports for the sole purpose of action. This is to be expected. It is their method of exercising their muscles. But as they grow older this energy should be directed toward some purpose in order that it may not waste itself and tear down the nervous system by an extravagant, undirected overflow. The best preventive medicine against these defects in children is to have something to do, some definite aim which they want to accomplish.

There is no general human tendency to remain on the infantile level of development or to regress to the behavior of childhood. This is only one of the many emotional paths into which children may be diverted during the period of their growth. To be sure, as we have said, many men and women never grow up. They remain children throughout life. They seek the pleasures of childhood. They exhibit the emotional outbreaks of boys and girls. They interpret events according to their wishes and, if objective situations do not yield to their desires, they follow the childish method of kicking them as though they were to blame. At least they do this figuratively. They complain about their ill treatment or bad luck, which is one of the adult equivalents for crying and smashing toys. Some of these men and women become moody after they have repeatedly and vainly knocked their heads against objective facts which are too hard to yield to such a soft battering ram. Women are likely to take refuge in hysterical illnesses of one sort or another, and men may turn for consolation to what they would do if they had a chance. Both of the sexes feel greatly abused.

It is a mistake to think that moodiness and sulkiness are inherited. Some, of course, are constitutionally ready for any one of the numerous emotional disturbances which approach, if they do not pass, the broad field of everybody's or no man's land, whichever one is pleased to call it. This is the area that separates the normal from the abnormal, the maladjusted from the "sane."

The emotional variations of children should be watched with intelligent, thoughtful care but should not become a subject of conversation with them or in their presence. If they seem to belong to that unfortunately large class of moody or temperamental individuals the first man to be consulted is the family physician. The emerging peculiarities may be a matter of health. At any rate, the physician who knows the history of the child should be able to give good advice.

The treatment in the home should vary with the individual. Universal rules are difficult here, and the advice to leave such a child alone is not one of the few universal rules. It is always desirable to ascertain whether any trouble is the cause of the mood. Parents who are intimate enough with their children to gain their confidence will have no difficulty in learning whether a real or imagined indignity is the explanation of the depression. Children, of course, are likely to exaggerate their social and personal woes.

Closely related to the inclination to moods is the tendency to what Jung has called introverted thinking. The thoughts of the introvert are introspective. They strike in. Theories rather than facts interest him. He is imaginative as a child and speculative as an adult. Social intercourse is likely to bore him and consequently he becomes a poor mixer. It may be thought that there are not many children of this type. Not a few, however, as every thoughtful observer will have discovered, are shy and, consequently, the question as to the cause of the shyness becomes important.

Many a child is pathetically anxious to be a "good fellow" with his or her associates yet is unable to realize the wish. The causes, of course, are many. Sometimes it is too much mother or father. Again the cause is excessive parental ambition for the child. He has been pushed forward more rapidly than ability warrants. Consequently, failure has become a habit. Disappointment is expected. Such a child may become oppressed by lack of success and his thoughts may be turned within either for the defensive consolation of daydreams or for the joy of being melancholy.

It may seem strange that depression can produce joy, but children of a certain type get the same sort of satisfaction out of their moods as women do who enjoy ill health. This satisfaction is of various kinds. One is the sympathy which is usually given to the depressed, and the other is that these children are getting even with their parents or with their associates. They have been abused, or think that they have been, which comes to the same thing, and now they are making those about them uncomfortable. This gives a certain temporary pleasure to young and old alike who feel that they have been badly treated. But the personality is being maimed.

In rather a general way, those of whom we have just been speaking are of the introvert type. They are likely to indulge in fancies of one sort or another. Sometimes these fantasies are directed toward actions which are rarely or never carried out because the psychic energy is always absorbed by inner contemplation or self-admiration. These children are shy, reserved, and awkward in society. Their emotional reactions are unpredictable and at times apparently inconsistent. As a result of what we may call their philosophical reflections they form resolutions which their emotional instability causes them to break. This produces a feeling of inferiority for which they try to compensate by fanciful creations of the things they wish they could accomplish.

The extrovert is especially receptive to stimuli from the outside world. It is the objective facts rather than subjective creations which interest him.

Extroverts are always good mixers and sometimes this has unfortunate results because they are likely to bank too heavily upon the asset of popularity. While it is not necessary that they substitute the success that geniality gives for the more lasting results of strenuous work, they are likely to do so.

If we have shown that human nature is too complex to be explained by one or two simple formulas, we have accomplished our purpose. The chief difficulty with many of the books on child study is that their authors have been emotionally debauched by one theory or another. Some are mired in sentimentality. For them children are by nature sweet little angels whose wings will surely sprout if the youngsters are not perverted by control and discipline. To others, Freudianism is the El Dorado of child training. Fixation, the libido, sublimation, and interpretation of dreams so fantastic at times as to strain human credulity, are their ways and means of guiding children and youths. What we wish to emphasize is that the human personality is enormously complex.

No one formula will explain its digressions from what, for want of a better name, we call the normal. Intelligence as measured by one or another of the various tests does not cover the wide sweep of this exceedingly complex and still largely unknown organic integration which is called personality. That the emotions play a much larger part in this organic and psychic integration than has previously been thought is now established, but in childhood these emotions take so many obscure paths that even the best informed are often unable to describe their course.

The effort in child training, so far as the emotions are concerned, should be to keep them within the rather wide area which characterizes what we call a well-balanced mind. Exaggerations in children, we have said, are to be expected but, as the child grows older, these unreal fancies should be guided toward reality. Evasion of the facts of life should arouse thoughtful anxiety in parents. "The flight from reality" is a fact which in children should awaken apprehension.

Feeling of inferiority—often injudiciously handled if not overworked, and the superiority complex which has not received the attention that it deserves—are emotional factors which should receive consideration, but attention unaided by the knowledge that will interpret emotional deviations is likely to be disastrous. Let us pause for a moment to consider these two emotional states.

The feeling of inferiority, as used by Adler, starts from some organic defect, but it has now been given a wider meaning. Children who are continually suppressed, who are chided for being "slow," or "awkward," may get the habit of self-depreciation. Frequent ridicule by playmates may have the same effect. Boys are especially sensitive to derogatory nicknames, such as "mamma's boy," "sissy," or "coward," and girls have lost all joy in life because of reflections on their personal appearance. As a bit of evidence of the modern stress on feminine beauty Walsh says that in the United States alone five million dollars a day are spent for cosmetics.

It is not the defect, real or imaginary, that causes the trouble but the emotional effect which is produced. Oftentimes the condition is trivial or even nonexistent. An elderly woman just told the writer that, when she was a child, red hair not being as popular as now, she thought that she could not endure the injustice of Providence in making her hair red. Several times she contemplated suicide.

An inferiority, vital or trivial and, hence, real or imagined, when heavily charged with emotion is a serious matter and every effort should be made to alleviate the outraged feeling of the boy or girl. When this is not successful the child will become a victim to doubts and anxieties about himself.

Failure breeds other failures until finally the youngster loses all self-confidence. This, it will be seen, is an emotional attitude. An idea gathers other thoughts around it, forming an organized system of ideas. The preponderance of the central thought determines the content and nature of its setting. Its actual or fancied importance also makes it a nucleus for emotions, and when such a system of ideas is emotionally saturated it becomes what has been called a complex.

A complex of unappreciated ability works out in many ways, most of which are unfortunate. There is always an attempt at some sort of mental adjustment which compensates, in a way, for the inferiority. Among the compensations are the "sour grapes" reaction and the "hard luck" belief. Gossiping and scandal-mongering belong here because they are attempts to justify one's self-esteem by belittling competitors.

At times these boys or girls who are discontented with lack of appreciation and of friends are excellent subjects for semicriminal and even criminal suggestions. A case which has just come to the writer's notice is a good illustration.

A college boy of unusual ability and high scholarship had no friends. His personality was so offensive that his classmates would have nothing to do with him. He felt this isolation keenly but, conscious of his superior ability, he regarded the others as made of a poorer quality of clay. Consequently, he was quite ready for the advances of a small group of boys who wanted to use him in college depredations. The friendship of these fellows pleased his vanity. At last he had found those who appreciated his worth. The outcome of the semicriminal acts was the expulsion from college of those who were caught. Now this boy talks about the unfairness of the decision. As a matter of fact, he was only a tool of those who knew how to use his discontentment.

How shall these boys and girls who have acquired a feeling of inferiority or isolation be dealt with? Much depends upon the individual and the cause of the feeling. Probably the best way is to talk it out with the adolescent so that he may calmly think the matter over and come to a reasonable outlook. It is more than likely that the trouble is largely emotional and, hence, remediable.

If the victim of inferiority is a boy, he may be making a pretense of superiority to compensate for inability or indolence. In such cases, attempts to "show off" by sporty clothes and pompous self-assertion are conspicuous. If the boy has unusual ability, his bumptious self-confidence and efforts to dominate are no less offensive to his associates, since youngsters at that age do not make distinctions. Each one would like to be regarded as a leader by his associates and be admired by the girls.

In the case of girls, desire to be attractive is usually the nucleus around which emotions cluster. Leadership with them is not so much the wish to lead as the desire to be prominent in their social group.

None of these qualities are necessarily bad. Self-assertion in boys, coupled with the desire for leadership, and the wish of girls not to be unattractive socially are not to be condemned. It is only when these thoughts and emotions form a complex the nucleus of which is a feeling of inadequacy, of not being appreciated, in short, of inferiority, that they are likely to produce an emotional catastrophe unless a wise adviser be in the confidence of the boy or girl to assist in untangling the badly mixed emotional complex.

We urge once more the intricacy of the human personality, and we insist that its aberrations cannot be cured by any single formula. That is the patent medicine method of treatment which treats symptoms rather than underlying causes. Skillful diagnosis is as essential in mental as in bodily disorders. Tendencies to emotional disturbance should be discovered at their emergence. After they have developed, recovery is never complete. The weak spot remains, and a nervous strain which otherwise might be resisted causes a collapse of the fragile emotional integration.

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CHAPTER XV

ADOLESCENCE

MATURITY means the ripening of all the powers which have been almost coyly appearing from time to time. The boy or girl has shown at moments amazing interest in questions of profound significance but their influence has not been great. At times, also, the child has given evidence of reasoning to an extent which is quite astounding. It is in adolescence, however, that these characteristics strike in and take firm root. During this period, questions of world-wide importance are likely to occupy the mind of the boy and girl. If they do not, the previous training in the home has largely failed. The reason for this statement is that this adolescent period is the time when such questions ought to be supremely interesting. It is in the early part of the adolescent period that debating societies are formed and questions requiring knowledge far beyond the age of these boys and girls are discussed.

During the earlier years, the connections of association fibers have been formed and now, if ever, they will be made functionally active. The mind has all the kinds of power which it will ever have. The development of these powers continues during adolescence but new ones are not acquired. This is the time for the consolidation of the mental characteristics which the young child should have gained. Personality is now being ripened and fixed.

The brain has increased in size and weight during childhood but its functional development has lagged behind.

The anatomical associations have been formed but their functional use has not yet been well established. Both training and education will play their part.

The child's mind has been largely limited to objects of sense perception. For this reason his interests and activities change rapidly. He is likely to begin something and suddenly to change before completing it.

The adolescent's mind, on the other hand, sees more than is offered to the senses. It discovers the implications of sense impressions, and these implications often interest the youngster more than the objects themselves.

Heretofore the use of these mental characteristics has been spasmodic. The child, as we have said, has shown moments of unexpected brilliancy but he has not followed up the leads which have appeared almost with the rapidity of a lightning flash and then have subsided as other interests took their place. Now, if ever, the boy and girl should show capacity for steady and reasonably prolonged effort. Pursuit of an end should be purposeful and unremitting. Ideas and ideals now dominate if they ever will, and their attainment becomes a definite goal.

Adolescence, as is well known, is the time when "radical" views are accepted and vigorously argued. Ideals take possession of the mind. The youngster lays plans, builds air castles, and indulges in daydreams which are often filled with wondrous adventures.

Feelings and emotions are now greatly enriched. This is due in part to the ideals of which we have spoken. Many adolescents want to become reformers. Some are overwhelmed with the inequalities in life.

Behavior at this time is likely to become less imitative and automatic. Intelligence is now playing a larger part in the control of conduct, but this intelligent direction is not yet constant or reliable. It is still more or less spasmodic and intermittent.

All through life, desires and aversions largely determine what one shall think and how one shall act. So far as behavior is concerned, habits of conduct should have been established before the boy or girl reaches adolescence. If these habits have not been established, it will be all but impossible to create and fix them during the period of young manhood and young womanhood. Adolescence being a time of tremendous emotional upheaval, boys and girls at this age will be controlled by emotions unless they have been led earlier in their lives to do a little thinking before acting.

The behavior of adults themselves is, to a great extent, under the control of the emotions. Impulsive action, as every one knows, leads to many a sleepless night. That the emotions are much more controlling during the period of early adolescence is self-evident when we remember that young boys and girls have not had the experiences of the more mature. This is the age when impulse tends to rule, and it certainly will control unless the boy and girl have been taught to delay action long enough to try to foresee the effect.

The need of "thrills" at this age is so well known as to be a platitude. This craving is caused in great part by the influence of the immense emotional waves which characterize the period. But the kind of excitement that will be sought will be largely determined by the environment. What is read and seen and heard will be dominating influences in this imitation.

We have said that adolescence is the time when boys and girls want to be reformers. Yet this statement is not true to-day of every adolescent. When, however, the tendency is not observed, it is probably a misfortune since its absence means the lack of the conditions in the environment which should create it.

This is so important as to deserve a moment's discussion. Adolescence, to repeat, is the period when emotions are rampant. These emotions will be directed either toward a social or a personal end. They always include desires and, if they are not directed toward social purposes, they will be absorbed in personal gratification.

Radicalism during this period is a healthy mental state and should be encouraged. Its dangerous outcome need not be feared by parents because the later tendency to conservatism is so strong. Indeed, its perpetuation would be desirable, as one can readily see from the tendency of adults to remain content with social inequalities and political corruption. But this radicalism should not be allowed to produce depression in the youths. A hopeful attitude of ultimate reform should be maintained.

The desire for thrills takes many forms during this period. Adventures are interesting and here we have the explanation of the present tendency of young adolescents to break the laws. They like the excitement. Violation of legal enactments is a risk worthy of their mettle. It is exciting to beat the law. Were they not forbidden to do these things, the temptation would be less strong. It would then be largely a matter of environment and associations. But doing what is forbidden is great sport for those who have not yet learned to control their behavior for the social good. This is also the age of nervous excitement, and the strain of modern social life is likely to take a heavy toll at an age when excitement is the thing that is desired.

We have emphasized the importance during earlier life of outdoor games and sports. The previous years have been the time when nervous connections have been forming and when muscles have had the exercise that they need to make them strong; but the need of outdoor games is just as great during the period of adolescence. This is the time when boys are likely to become irritable and hard to please, and girls anemic and listless. The physical changes which occur during the early teens draw heavily upon the strength of youths and, with girls especially, it is the time when the tax upon vitality may be so heavy that emotional disorders are likely to occur.

With the advent of puberty the emotional life expands rapidly and enormously. New instincts reveal themselves and new interests appear. In a large measure, these instincts and interests are connected with social relationships, the meaning of which is not altogether clear to the boy and girl. The idea of being a child among other children and being controlled by those in authority recedes, and in its place there comes the thought of being a young man or woman.

Whether the young adolescent will regard himself as a responsible member of a social order beyond his immediate group depends to a large extent upon the home environment. If the child has not got some ideas of social responsibility it is doubtful whether as a youth he will acquire them.

Patterns of future conduct are laid down during adolescence, but behavior through the earlier years determines, to a large extent, the characteristics of these patterns. If a father, for example, has not been the confidant of his six-year-old son it is improbable that the young adolescent will consult him about his troubles and his problems of behavior.

Opinions regarding right and wrong and social obligations should have become fairly well established by the time adolescence is reached. Up to the age of twelve or thirteen, children are prone to willfulness, truancy, thoughtless cruelty and irritability. Beyond that age offenses are likely to be more definite and serious. "Nearly half of all thefts are committed by persons who are not yet of age."

Sex differences in this respect are rather marked and interesting. Boys are more inclined to crimes of a violent kind, such as definite violation of law or the destruction of property. Petty thievery is probably as common among girls as boys, but girls are given more to deception and falsehoods. When caught, boys are more likely "to take their medicine," while girls try to escape by deceptions of various sorts. When we consider the kinds of things stolen, we find that girls are more inclined to steal ornaments of much or little value, while boys commit thefts that may require violence, and which are such clear violations of law as to threaten them with the reformatory if they are caught.

The thefts of girls, on the other hand, are more usually from those who will protect them if they are caught. Girls are more inclined to conceal what they have stolen and to lie about it than are boys, though they have no monopoly of this defense. The vices of envy and jealousy are, of course, more characteristic of girls than of boys because of the different value attached to personal charm and grace.

Falsehoods are frequently told in the home for purposes of self-defense. Fear of severe censure or punishment causes many lies. Probably fear of the treatment in the home is the most common reason for untruthfulness. If it is not fear of reprimand or of punishment it is fear of humiliation and shame. Parents who can talk matters out frankly and openly with their boys and girls are rare.

It will be noticed that certain characteristics of adolescence which we have given seem to contradict one another. That, however, is the nature of this period of life. We have said that this is a period of altruism, desire to reform the world, and now we find that it is also the age when more thefts are committed than during any other equal number of years. Both of these statements, however, are true and they are only different phases of the statement made above that adolescence is the period of tumultuous upheavals, of uncertainty regarding one's relations to society, of ethical instability, and of the desire for excitement.

It would be a mistake to assume that the semicriminal acts of which we have spoken indicate moral perversion. Many times they are due to the desire for an adventure without thought of their moral significance. At other times, the desire of young adolescents to swagger is the cause. These youths have not yet acquired an independence. They must have the approval of their associates and, when one proposes that they appropriate a parked automobile for a joy ride, these youths fear that refusal will mark them as "yellow." To boast is also characteristic of adolescent boys, and if they brag they must carry on when their bluff is called.

But if adolescence is the period of amateur crimes, it is also the age of altruistic exploits. Youths like to be reckless and daring. They want to show their defiance of danger. If this defiance calls for reckless altruistic risks, they are ready for the danger but if, again, the immediate circumstances call for exploits of a semicriminal nature, they are equally prepared to take a chance. Not only history but everyday life contains records of dangers incurred by adolescents in the service of others. This age is filled with contradictions, and the final outcome will depend in large measure on the ability of parents to understand their boys and girls.

During the earlier years, opportunities to measure oneself against others, to test one's courage in the face of trying circumstances, have been few. The child has been sheltered. He has been protected in the home and school. Now he is, so to speak, out in the world. He must show his worth, but his idea of what constitutes this worth is still in the process of formation. The circle in which he moves remains rather small. He has his group of associates whose good opinion must be held. Even though he has been taught ideals of ethical behavior, they have not yet become sufficiently established to maintain themselves against the taunts of his associates.

How much of the behavior of an adolescent is a bluff—namely, a defense reaction toward calls to actions which are thought wrong—is always a matter of uncertainty. The difficulty of deciding this question is one of the perplexities of child training. Youths are prone to be secretive. They rarely reveal their inner thoughts and feelings. They never do unless they have grown up in the conviction that their parents or teachers are sympathetic with their faults as well as with their virtues.

Some of the reasons given for suicide by adolescents illustrate this and also show the turmoil of the emotional life to which we have referred above. When boys under eighteen years of age leave notes, saying, "I have been a failure," "I want to try the great adventure," "Life is a hopeless puzzle," or when the suicide follows a failure in the school examination or results from a reprimand by the father or mother, something is wrong in the home. In such cases there is no confiding intimacy.

In early adolescence success elates and failure depresses. Self-assertion and self-abasement alternate with abrupt and often violent results. Pride is easily flattered, and as readily wounded, with corresponding emotional elation or depression.

Consistency at this age is not to be expected. Boys and girls alike, are trying to locate themselves in a new world. If we assume that they have been trained in ethical behavior, the conditions which they meet are, nevertheless, exceedingly complex and disturbing.

Adolescence is the period of moods, whims, and emotional fluctuations which many times cannot be easily explained. These varying moods exert a tremendous influence on conduct and, consequently, the actions of the adolescent are so unstable as to be perplexing to those who do not realize the emotional conflict beneath the surface which may at any time end in an explosion. "A static condition of things cannot well persist in the face of emotional reactions set up by the adolescent conflict. . . . The escapes are answers to deep-seated demands and to the stimulus of unconscious strivings and wishes vaguely, if at all, capable of being expressed."[1]

Interests wax and wane according to the condition of the underlying emotional conflicts. At one moment the adolescent is listless and moody, at another overflowing with energy, enthusiasm, and good will. While boys and girls alike, at this age, may be lazy and careless, they may also suddenly throw themselves into some enterprise with tremendous energy. The explanation again is the emotions, the significance and cause of which is not understood even by the individual.

To assume merely one explanation for emotional eruptions is failure to understand this tremendously turbulent period of life. Emotions always tend to be tumultuous but, during youth, they are especially riotous. Calm thought is not easy for adults but at the age of which we are speaking it is least of all to be expected. These are the insurgent years.

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[1] Sidney I. Schwab and Borden S. Veeder, *The Adolescent: His Conflicts and Escapes* (Appleton), pp. 255, 256.

Reflective, thoughtful behavior is a slow growth. Many adults never attain it. Impulsive action, or behavior based on emotions which gradually accumulate, is common.

Effort to train children to think before they speak or act should, of course, begin in early childhood, but this training should be largely indirect. A quiet tone of voice is tremendously effective here. Queries again, as to the best course of action, the answer to which the child may or may not give, have a weighty influence. In any case, thoughts should be started in the mind of the boy and girl, and the reasons for one line of action, as the parents see them, may be given.

If the advice of the parents is ignored, the training of the boy or girl has been a failure. This does not mean that parents are always right and the children wrong. Indeed, the reverse is often true. But if the attitude of the adolescent is that the judgment of father or mother does not count, the cause lies in the home. To avoid misunderstanding we hasten to add that if obedience is secured through fear of the consequences of disobedience the result may be even more disastrous.

Effort should be made to avoid bringing to the front the issue of obedience. As we have said before, instances when authority must be used are frequent enough without seeking them. Even then much depends upon the manner of the insistence.

Voluntary obedience should be the aim, and this requires a thoughtfully planned method of control. The subject under discussion should be talked over from the viewpoint of the boy or girl. This is of especial importance during early adolescence when the attempt is being made to establish habits of deliberative action.

The father of a boy of seventeen has followed the practice of agreeing with whatever his son wishes to do. The boy has decided upon many vocations for which his father does not think him fitted. He was going into the army, then to Annapolis to prepare for a naval career. He next decided to follow music, but lately he has concluded that he will take up aviation.

These vocational problems are given only to illustrate the plan which this man follows. Whenever the boy proposes something that does not require immediate decision his father says, "All right, go ahead." Then, from time to time he points out the disadvantages or questions the special fitness of the boy. Do not his abilities indicate another line of work? The suggestions are always made incidentally as though they were merely interesting matters of the moment. In this way, as the father says, he has talked the boy out of "many foolish notions" without the question of obedience ever being raised. Probably it is needless to say that this father is a "pal" of his son.

We said above that the way in which authority is used is important. The reasons for a requirement should be convincing, and there are certain grounds of action which appeal to children of this age. "I must do my work, why shouldn't you do yours? You are no longer a little child; you are growing up," said a father to his boy who wanted to take the fourth night out during the week.

The writer wonders if adolescents are not too much aware of the tumult which they are creating. They know that they are the topic of discussion at parent meetings; that they are being "written up"; that punishment is out of style, and that no one knows what to do with them. If they have not heard of "Flaming Youth" and "The Challenge of Youth," they are quite familiar with the principle underlying the words. Few of them, perhaps, have heard of the "Youth Movement," but all of them know there is a movement of youths which is causing much anxiety. They have become very conscious of their power, and this is bad. To play up to one's reputation is human.

A few years ago, the board of education in one of our large cities voted to abolish high school fraternities because they were believed to be the source of much evil. The boys protested and the fathers carried the matter to the State Supreme Court with final victory for the boys.

It is not the writer's purpose to argue the question of these fraternities but, in any case, it is unfortunate for boys to discover that they can get what they want if they make enough trouble. With reference to the particular high school controversy which the pupils won, a man was held up in the street by two lads who evidently believed in using their newly won rights. They were unfortunate in their selection of the one upon whom to practice their freedom. He happened to be a detective who shot one of them, and the following day it was learned that the two youths had just left a fraternity meeting to put the right of "self-expression" into practice.

Boys and girls have been receiving too much publicity. Learning that they are regarded as problems, they play up to their reputation. Child training is not helped by making adolescents aware of their power and by encouraging the belief that their judgment is wiser than that of those who are older. Perhaps adults have made a mess of many matters, as we are assured they have. The present writer is willing to admit the truth of the charge, but he doubts the wisdom of telling adolescents that they had better assume the leadership.

To be sure, youths should be encouraged to think about questions but doubt of one's omniscience is the beginning of wisdom, and humility has not yet reached a pathological stage in many adolescents. Occasionally a boy or girl is found with an inferiority complex and then, as physicians say, the diagnosis indicates the need of inoculation with aggressiveness, but what physician would advise dosing all children with quinine because one case of malaria had been discovered?

As in other matters, much depends upon the training which the boy or girl has received before the adolescent period is reached. If parents settle all questions for their children, giving them no opportunity for the development of responsibility, independent decisions will be unknown.

The writer has a case of this sort in one of his classes at the present time. The girl is twenty-two years of age and, except for her size and other physical conditions, she has all the signs of a girl of sixteen. She is timid, and "wilts," as she herself expresses it, when called upon in class. Her explanation is that even to the present time her mother settles all questions for her. These decisions are not made as requirements since the home discipline is easy if not lax. But the girl has always been taught to lean upon her mother and now that she has reached an age of maturity she is still a child.

Cases of this sort are not unusual, but more frequently, perhaps, parents pay little or no attention to their boys and girls until some trouble arises and then the attention is likely to be arbitrarily severe. A study of the faults of parents as seen by college students emphasizes spasmodic discipline, or none at all, greater interest in social affairs than in the studies and development of their children, and lack of emotional poise. The following criticisms, given in consultations with students, are reported by Professor Frank L. Wright, of Washington University: "Too lenient, sometimes in serious matters"; "tended to baby us too much"; "did not understand us children"; "can't get our point of view"; "no interest in our school work"; "unable to discipline"; "nags"; "spasmodic discipline"; "temperamental and moody"; "mother was away from home too much having a good time while we were left alone." These are some of the faults which older children have seen in their parents. But, among these criticisms, one virtue that was emphasized should be recorded. It is that "mother keeps young by being a pal."

These opinions of adolescents are chiefly valuable because they indicate a state of mind in the youngsters, and that is decidedly suggestive. Clearly these boys and girls of college age do not think that they were or are understood at home, and they feel that they were some kind of useless impedimenta to be left alone so long as the convenience of the parents was not disturbed and to be shoved aside when in the way. The criticisms also show what we have said before, namely, that children want to be controlled. But they want to be guided intelligently.

We said above that children even of the adolescent age should not receive too much publicity. We have little information about the outcome of superior ability but a number of years ago several youngsters were widely advertised as youthful prodigies. While these cases are not numerous enough for definite conclusions, it is nevertheless rather interesting that none of them have subsequently distinguished themselves in the slightest degree.

One thing we may say pretty definitely, and that is that publicity, even local publicity, is not favorable for the best development of boys and girls. The inferiority complex is being widely advertised but the superiority complex, let us again emphasize, is just as disastrous. How shall parents steer a safe course between these two dangers, either one of which may wreck the happiness and success of their boy or girl?

Several things may be emphasized in this connection. A tendency to extreme self-examination and introspection, as has been said, should be discouraged. The line between the normal and pathological moods of adolescents is a narrow one. Exaggerated self-scrutiny is always dangerous. Advice here cannot be specific because of the individual differences in boys and girls. The best general advice is a many-sided activity, athletic games, and at least occasional evening round-tables in the home about recent discoveries and other subjects of interest. The point of these activities, of course, is to prevent the boy and girl from becoming too introspective, and to give them something worth thinking about outside of themselves. In addition, of course, each of the parents should be a "good fellow," one to whom the young adolescent can go and confide the troubles and discouragements that are so characteristic of this age.

Hyperconscientiousness is, perhaps, not frequently found to-day among adolescents, but there is danger of it under certain conditions. It sometimes follows abnormal nerve strain and results from the inability of emotional boys and girls to find a consistent philosophy of life. They see so many contradictions among those about them. They hear one course of action "preached" and observe that the opposite is followed, often indeed, by those who do the preaching.

Aside from the immediate influence of the home, the best means of control and direction is probably through the gang. Until comparatively lately it was believed that boys alone respond completely to this influence, but the more recent experiments with groups of girls, as we have noticed, has rather convincingly shown that the sex differences in this respect are not great. Gang psychology is really one phase of the psychology of the crowd. Sometimes the gang is closely united. At other times the organization is loose and transient. Every high school has what may be called its peculiar spirit. The boys and girls stand for certain definite codes of behavior. These codes may be good or they may be bad. Much, of course, depends upon the principal and teachers of the school, and upon the relation that exists between them and the pupils. One school is always having disturbances which are sometimes serious, and another has no troubles. Why?

The principal, of course, cannot exert his influence without support. Here is where the gang enters the picture. Every school has at least one leader. Usually this leader is an unusual athlete. This is what gives him his predominance among his fellows. Naturally he has stamina; if he had not he would not be a good athlete. Consequently, we have the elements of leadership in physical and mental vigor combined with the qualities that usually go with them.

Wise parents will know something about the spirit of the school attended by their boy or girl. They will also get acquainted socially with the leader of the school. Naturally they should not make their acquaintance too ostentatious because adolescents are quick in their suspicions and, at this age especially, the influence of adults must be exerted indirectly. The leader, however, can be invited to the home provided the invitation does not give the appearance of effort toward control. The importance of indirect influence during this period of life cannot be too greatly stressed. If the father be of such a nature that he can be a hail fellow well met with his growing boy, there will be little difficulty in creating the desired influence.

"Dad's a great old boy," said one adolescent to the writer recently. This remark was made apropos of a visit to the college in which the boy, who was then a freshman, had violated one of the important college rules and was threatened with dire punishment.

The young man was greatly disturbed mentally and emotionally because he feared lest he would jeopardize his father's social and ministerial standing. The father had been hastily summoned by the college president for consultation, but before talking with him he had a conference with his son. The boy admitted the charge and was excessively nervous, not over the consequences to himself but about the effect upon his father's standing in the community in which he was a prominent pastor. Let the boy himself, who was a college graduate when he related the experience, complete the story.

"Dad burst out laughing when I told him what I had done. 'Well,' he said, 'of course it's bad. You shouldn't have done it. You've got yourself into a serious scrape and must take the consequences but don't worry about it. Just learn your lesson and next time think before you act.'"

Let us tie the strings of our discussion. The adolescent period is the time when the training of childhood is culminating. Views of behavior have been established, and habits, good or bad, have, to a large extent, been fixed. Up to this time the boy and girl have been largely under the control of the parents. Discipline has been, or has not been, maintained and by discipline we mean that the advice and requirements of the home have been observed.

At thirteen or fourteen years of age, however, the boy and girl feel and assume an independent attitude. It is no longer good form to be tied to mother's apron strings, and it never was good psychology. The right of "self-determination" is now felt, if it is not expressed in words. The boy feels that he is now a young man with all the rights and privileges belonging to young manhood; and the girl regards herself as a young lady who, in her turn, must have the freedom which she discovers in the actions of her associates.

During earlier childhood, there were violations of rules and commands. Adventures were interesting but they were mild compared with the desires for excitement of the later period.

With the advent of adolescence, however, violation of laws assumes a charm which was unthought of during earlier years. Thrills of danger are now demanded. This word is significant because it has been used so frequently by youngsters of good families who have stolen automobiles or have engaged in hold-ups. Naturally, it is not in the word that we are interested but in the psychology behind it. Young adolescents have always wanted excitement, but the kind of excitement which satisfied them was restricted by the opportunities. Prohibition and the automobile have greatly enlarged the adventuresome perspective of boys and girls of high school age. They now have an opportunity not merely to disobey the rules and regulations of their parents but, and this is much more exciting, to violate the laws of the land. For those of an age when excitement is demanded this is remarkably opportune. It satisfies the wildest desires of youth, and incidentally leads at times to more serious results than were anticipated.

We have also observed that this is the time of emotional stress and strain. The overconscientious boy or girl is likely to be depressed with the weight of the ethical and moral burden which is assumed.

It is the age, also, when failure to attain one's ambition in school or elsewhere may produce a feeling of inferiority that starts a vicious circle of behavior. Unable to do all of the things attempted, failure in studies produces a depression that prevents success in other things. The result is a feeling of general incompetence and hopelessness that reacts on behavior in many ways.

But the reverse of inferiority characterizes certain youths at this age. Those of more than usual ability who catch ideas quickly are likely to acquire an exaggerated estimate of their powers. These are the superficial boys and girls. Discovering that they can make a good impression without much work, they rapidly develop into "bluffers." Parents, easily deceived, urge them on because of the good appearance which they create in the school and elsewhere; and only when it is too late do these youths discover that swaggering does not carry far. The local notoriety which they have received has left a serious defect in their character and personality.

Finally, we have found that the strain of trying to do so many things during the period when the quality of nervous fiber is being fixed has disturbed the healthy development of the nervous system. Boys become irritable under restraint. They cannot adapt themselves to professional or business requirements because they have never learned the need of adaptation in the home. Girls, in their turn, fail to acquire the vigor which they will need in later life. Anemic girls with flabby muscles are sure to have frayed nerves.

To put it briefly, in conclusion, adolescence is first of all the culmination of earlier training. A period when the emotional turbulence is most tempestuous is to-day the time of least guidance and direction. The demand of the adolescent for freedom of action, to be allowed to do what associates do, to be treated as young men or young women before the age of self-control is reached, to do what one wishes without the experiences needed for self-direction, is a dangerous freedom. The penalty of "self-determination," without the guideposts of knowledge of the results of actions, is like wandering around Mont Blanc in a snowstorm. The guiding cairns of wise and unwise experiences are not visible.

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CHAPTER XVI

DISCIPLINE AND ITS PSYCHOLOGY

PERHAPS no subject concerned with training children is in greater confusion to-day than the question of discipline in the home and school. Control is thought to be out of date. We are hearing so much about children expressing themselves that it looks as though they, instead of the parents and teachers, should be the rulers. In fact, in many homes they are, and also in some schools which follow the precept, "Let the child do what he wants to do."

The chief difficulty, as the present writer sees it, is the failure to understand the significance of discipline and to distinguish it from punishment. Indiscriminate punishment is, of course, definitely bad because it is unpsychological. It does not produce the results that are desired. The question, however, as to whether punishment should ever be inflicted is another question which will be discussed a little later.

Perhaps the best introduction to this exceedingly perplexing question is a well-worn fable which the writer heard some years ago. As the tale runs, a traveler, sleeping in his tent in the forest, was awakened by a donkey that was trying to talk with him. The following conversation then took place:

"Won't you please allow me to put my nose under your tent?" said the donkey. "You see it is raining and the water drips down unpleasantly over my nose." The traveler, being kind-hearted, could not refuse such a reasonable request, so he allowed the donkey to stick his nose into the tent; but pretty soon the donkey remarked pathetically, "The rain is running into my ears. Please permit me to put my head in just a little farther. I will not disturb you, but my ears are so uncomfortable." The request was reasonable and, consequently, the sympathetic traveler permitted the donkey to stick his head into the tent.

"My neck is getting wet," cried the donkey. "It's raining so hard. Just let me put my head a little farther inside." Of course, the traveler could not refuse such a plea and, therefore, permitted the donkey to put his entire head under the tent. Then the donkey turned around and kicked the traveler out into the rain and proceeded to lie down on his comfortable bed.

This is a psychological story upon which those who are training children should ponder. Children do not become bad or desperate all at once. They do not suddenly break away from reasonable behavior and become reckless little villains. Like most other things, change of conduct occurs gradually. Oftentimes the doting or careless parents do not observe the alteration. They have yielded to the donkey's request for comfort until they have lost their grasp on the situation and are no longer in control of their own home.

Discipline consists in producing and maintaining habits of thoughtful behavior. If this is done, control has been established. Intrinsically it has no relation to punishment.

Probably the great majority of psychoneurotics owe their lack of mental balance to the absence of discipline, as we have defined it, during childhood. Maladjustment to the environment is one of the chief characteristics of nervous disorders. Such persons have real or imaginary physical discomfort or woes. The present misery is compared unfavorably with the childhood period when one's own wishes were attained by the various methods known to children.

A psychoneurotic can often carry on quite well in a simple, uniform environment but finds it impossible to make satisfactory adjustments to novel, difficult, and complicated situations. He fails to hold his own in perplexing conditions without the support of his mother or father. In other words, the psychoneurotic is an adult child. He has not developed emotionally.

Geniuses are probably born and not made, but it is much less certain that all of those who adapt themselves to the stresses of adult life are born with the power to do so. With average ability, the failure is undoubtedly caused by lack of discipline in the home. The adult psychoneurotic had his own way during childhood. He was allowed to evade difficulties instead of facing and surmounting them. He did not meet the perplexities of adjustment. Consequently, after growing up, the young man or young woman is still immature, and infantilism is not an adequate equipment for maturity.

Control should, of course, be directed toward self-discipline. Only those who have grown up mentally and emotionally have learned to discipline themselves. The unadjusted—those who do not fit—have never learned the art, because when children they were not trained in regular habits of work, reasonable amounts of recreation, or in habits of emotional poise.

Janet has suggested that these incompetents should reduce their psychic expenditure if they are going to escape mental bankruptcy. On the mental no less than on the financial exchange, payment depends upon the balance between income and expenditure. Janet, therefore, urges simplifying life by reducing the complexities of the environment. This seems to be good doctrine for adults who are unable to meet the stress of business, social, and professional life to-day. But the treatment is only an attempt to overcome the bad training during the childhood of these adult failures.

A man or woman unable to meet the obligations of maturity may reduce the demands of the environment. If it is a matter of earning a living, a position of less responsibility may be secured and, under these less exacting conditions, these adults may become almost "normal." The outbreak of their psychoneurosis was caused by the demand for a psychic expenditure which they could not meet; but back of this immediate cause lies the lack of a stabilizing discipline during their childhood.

The World War showed that there is a strain which even "normal" men cannot meet. War, of course, puts a tremendous tax upon the psychic energy of the soldiers. Fortunately, civil life does not call for the same expenditure of energy. But the fact that there is a point at which so-called normal men break down is immensely important for the training and development of children.

One only need think of acquaintances to find intelligent young men and women who have failed to adjust themselves to the conditions in which chronological maturity finds them. These are the maladjusted ones. Perhaps they have not found their right occupation, or, again, the trouble may be that they are still trying to play the tricks of childhood by dodging the burdens and responsibilities of life. It is possible, as we have said, for a young man or woman to accept a business position of less responsibility, but it is not so easy for the husband or wife to escape the duties which marriage puts upon them. One serious trouble with discipline in the home is that so many adults have not grown up mentally and emotionally. They are still practicing childhood's methods. A psychoneurotic has not outgrown the childhood tendency to try to make the world more to his liking by evading life's unpleasant realities.

This evasion has various causes and reveals itself in different ways. The parents or teacher may make too heavy demands upon the boy or girl. Influenced by the hope of unusual ability, the child may be pushed forward more rapidly in the school than its native ability warrants. This conflict between ability and scholastic ideals causes a maladjustment which is likely to have serious emotional consequences. Only the indifferent child who pays no attention to the ambitions of his parents, will escape disaster under these conditions. It is the conscientious boy or girl who pays the penalty for these unintelligent demands. These children, finding themselves unable to gratify the ambition of the home, begin to worry and then the vicious circle of maladjustment—worry, still greater maladjustment and nervous fears ending in psychoneurosis—begins its malignant whirl.

The guiding principle in the home and school, so far as discipline is concerned, as well as with reference to other matters of development, is to plan such conditions that the children will want to do what the parents or teachers wish. Learning how to prepare the stage setting to induce children to do what one wants them to do is the corner stone of child training. But setting the stage requires a knowledge of child psychology and a keen interest in working out the problem of producing results without the use of brute authority.

A business man keenly alive to the problems of handling subordinates recently told the writer that he has never forgotten his first experience in the business world. He was at that time a reporter on one of the New York daily newspapers and the city editor, as this man says, never ordered the subordinates to do anything. He always said: "John, there is a big fire at such and such a street. Wouldn't you like to go down and report it?" Or at another time he would call one of the young men to his desk and say, "A murder has been committed with all sorts of possibilities for detective work. How would you like to try your hand at solving it?" This city editor knew how to set the stage to get the things accomplished which he wanted done. "The enthusiasm in the office was tremendous," said the writer's informant, as he looked back reminiscently over his early days.

The defense mechanism of adults is working overtime to-day. They try to hide their own incompetence by excuses for their failures. "Children are not the same as when we were young," they say. As a matter of fact, however, human nature does not change so quickly. The difference to-day is in the greater opportunity for getting into trouble, and in the perplexity of parents.

The automobile, moving picture shows, and the enormous extension of the idea of economic and political freedom have so greatly changed conditions that the problem of child training has become much more complex than when the present adult generation was young. Parents themselves have more demands upon their time. At least they think they have, and this comes to the same thing. The call of the automobile and of the various entertainments is as insistent for parents as for the children. Consequently, for all except the more thoughtful, there is less time to plan for the training and development of children in the home.

Children expect to obey until they find that they do not have to do so. They are always trying out their parents, as they test their teachers, to see how far they can go, and if given a little leeway, they invariably accept it and try, like the donkey, to push on a little farther.

Children are a good deal like the lower animals. They expect at the beginning to recognize authority but when they find that the authority does not restrain they use their freedom to the limit. A horse, for example, when once allowed to run away is never wholly safe. One must admit, however, that the necessity of punishment in school or home means that the teacher or parent has failed. A teacher may give up his job, resign and make a new start in a different place. The writer has often advised this change when the discipline of a school has broken down. But parents cannot resign. Perhaps it is sometimes unfortunate that they cannot. If we were omniscient, punishment would never be necessary but, unfortunately, the most thoughtful parents and teachers make mistakes. The donkey is allowed to get his head a little too far into the tent and heroic action is then needed to regain control.

Is punishment ever necessary? Certainly no one believes in its use as a method of control. It originated in the need of weighting the scales against bad conduct. It has always been easier to forbid children to do undesirable things and then to punish them if they disobey than to create conditions which shall preserve discipline without punishment.

The latter method requires more intelligence and much more thought and planning. Consequently, since thinking is not easy, this plan is followed only by the more thoughtful teachers and parents.

One writer of reputation has said that punishment to be effective must be severely painful. This is an error. Snapping the fingers of a two-year-old child who insists upon handling fragile objects and who has already broken several, does not inflict severe pain upon the child, but it does establish a negatively conditioned reflex against handling those objects.

To be sure, all fragile objects can be placed beyond the reach of such a child. This, of course, should be the general method of procedure. It is well, so far as possible, to remove temptations. But should the young child never learn not to do what is forbidden? This view the writer cannot accept. Out in the business or professional world, young men and women are continually obliged to refrain from doing what they wish to do. This is a part of the training in adaptation which is needed throughout life. But it is important to add that cases requiring punishment should not be sought. The need for this kind of discipline occurs frequently enough without making opportunities.

One defect in child training is the human tendency to emphasize one aspect of a problem. Teachers are likely to give all of their attention to the intellectual development of their pupils; and parents, if they give any special attention to their children, are inclined to regard unquestioning obedience as their chief goal. Still others, hopelessly mired in the mass of psychological information which has been accumulated in recent years, give up the problem.

We are making a very commonplace but important statement when we say that the well-trained child has received a rounded development. This means a healthy body, obedience, or at any rate thoughtful consideration of the opinions of parents, a keenly alert intellect, and emotional health. If these ends are achieved discipline has been attained.

Discipline has suffered because it has been assumed to be synonymous with forced restraint. Consequently, with the passing of punishment discipline collapsed. A bit of evidence for this statement comes from public health officials. They say that they themselves and parents have great difficulty in getting children to remain quiet long enough to take a throat culture. Following the method successfully used in the home to avoid the disagreeable, boys and girls throw themselves back, stiffen and, when the attempt is made to restrain them, they fight. The mother who is present has absolutely no controlling influence.

Disciplined children cannot be produced by undisciplined parents or teachers. A nervous, irritable mother, a business-centered father, or an emotionally unbalanced teacher cannot hope to give children the poise and thoughtfulness which distinguish the disciplined from the undeveloped. When the boy and girl leave their home and school, they go out into a world of which they are largely ignorant. If they have not learned to do the day's work cheerfully and efficiently, they are candidates for the guild of incompetents. The boy drops to a lower level of responsibility while the girl is likely to take refuge in nervous illnesses. Failure to meet responsibilities in the outside world is punished, and the punishment, if not physically painful, causes mental or emotional turmoil, and this is about the severest punishment which can be inflicted.

We have said elsewhere that up to about six years of age discipline, to a large extent, should be training in habits of obedience. Even during this early period parents should plan situations which would make the need of authority as rare as possible. But commands and prohibitions are so much easier than to arrange conditions which will make the child want to do what the parent wishes him to do that the prohibition method is as common in the home as it is in the state and nation.

When the child passes beyond approximately six years of age, its insistence upon reasons for requests is both more frequent and more psychological. The reasoning process is becoming more conspicuous. Even now, however, the child should not be allowed to get the habit of whining, "Why must I do it?" Nevertheless, it is now time for reasons for requirements to be given; but they should come from the parents and teachers voluntarily and not because of the insistence of the child.

The reader will notice that discipline ought to be expected and that conformity to it is always to be insisted upon. But the demands should be reasonable. They should never be caused by irritation.

It is amazing how few cases will arise that require severe discipline if parents once get the notion that behavior is the result of the conditions which surround the child. Boys' clubs and girls' societies are the clearest illustration of this. In those organizations, the children do what they are expected to do because the conditions demand certain actions.

Punishment, of course, must not be thought of as merely whipping. If this kind of punishment is ever needed the offending parents or teachers should attend a habit clinic. Penalties should be what Herbert Spencer called natural punishments. These are the ones that grow naturally out of the situation. If a small boy gets mad at his wagon and breaks the wheels with a stone, he should be compelled to lose the pleasure of a wagon. A new one should not be bought.

With older boys and girls, the nature of the natural punishment will vary somewhat. A boy has failed to get the lessons for to-morrow, and now he wants to spend the evening out. The father is sorry. There is no reason in the world why he should not go to the dance except that he neglected to do his studying at the time prescribed. It is just one of those unfortunate laws of nature. That is all. If we do things when they should be done, pleasures are in order, but if we fail to do them at the proper time the penalty is inevitable. We have nothing to do with it. It is one of the regrettable laws, for the violation of which we must suffer. It is unfortunate but unavoidable.

The notion of natural punishments which used to be talked about so much has been largely dropped out of child psychology and child training, except as an interesting historical method proposed by an "ancient" philosopher called Herbert Spencer. Present-day educational psychology is largely a matter of statistics and measurements mixed with a rather weak solution of academic psychology. The nascent interests of children which may be utilized as motives for behavior during certain ages have been forgotten. Educational psychologists do not refer to them, and books on child study mention them only as one of the interesting ideas of the Stanley Hall school of thought. Yet, as we have said, some reactions—behavior—are more easily and successfully conditioned at certain ages than at other times. Why?

Here, as in so many other matters, we do not build on the solid foundation which has been laid. We begin anew. The old is dropped even when there is good reason to retain it. As in selling other goods the new excludes the old.

Education and discipline should be a growth. Control of children should always be borne in mind, but the control should be an intelligent direction, and the method adapted to the age of the child.

The line between disciplinary rigidity and acquiescence in the efforts of the children to escape requirements is not an easy one to draw. Too severe discipline makes a child dull and subservient, or secretly disobedient. Lax control, on the other hand, produces self-centered, thoughtless, undependable adolescents. The latter are often attractive and winning, because of their eruptive personality. This is likely to lead to even less control because their vivacious humor is disarming. But these pleasing personal qualities carry one only a little way in the impersonal atmosphere of the outside world. People tire of them when ugly selfishness protrudes.

Sometimes those in control of these winsome children have their moments of irritation when they strive ineffectually to use their authority. But they have tried and failed too often to deceive youngsters who have tasted the sweetness of freedom from restraint. Nagging is then likely to be the weapon used. This is one of the adult substitutes for childish whining. It is also a confession of weakness, and children quickly sense the evidence of incompetence in those who are trying to train or teach them.

Nagging is a nerve irritant until the centers in the brain are blunted to the stimulus. Then it passes by, unheeded except for the reflex response which usually is an angry retort or sullen repression of the turbulent emotions.

We have tried to show that discipline is not to be understood in the old meaning of the word. It does not mean punishment, though an inexperienced mother may need to use disciplinary measures of the old-fashioned kind to regain lost authority.

Discipline, as we have used the word, means control that leads to intelligent self-direction. Self-determination that is never restrained quickly becomes egocentric with all of the unfortunate characteristics of selfishness. Then, later, when the young woman is no longer protected by indulgent parents, failure to gratify her wishes causes her to use the woman's weapon for offensive operations. She retires within herself, mopes, and dwells on ungratified expectations and ambitions. The door to nervous illnesses is now open. Never having learned to face responsibilities, she gladly accepts the soothing flattery of the fantasies which she conjures up. She is unappreciated, and hysteria, or some other nervous malady, offers refuge and wins the sympathy that she craves but is unable to get in any other way.

The defense mechanism of boys who are not valued at their own self-appraisement works in a different way. These lads are likely to assume the "don't care" attitude. Actually, they do care very much, but they try to satisfy their self-esteem by adopting the pose of indifference. Finally, this mental attitude becomes a habit, and the consequent neglect of work in their business or profession lowers their efficiency. Admonition and reprimands become more frequent until they get discouraged and, as one young man of twenty-five just told the writer was true of him, they "give it up." This is another form of the vicious circle to which we have already called attention. With both boys and girls it begins with belief in lack of appreciation or, as in the case of girls, with a desire for more attention than they receive. Then comes a conscious or unconscious attempt at self-defense, followed in the one instance by the pretence of unconcern and in the other by nervous invalidism. In each case the final outcome is irritability and inefficiency.

Discipline in the home and school is the preparation for meeting the trials and strains of life. When it is intelligently maintained, the boy and girl acquire a penetrating, cutting intellect together with the stability given by emotional poise. Life's problems are then attacked with zest in the conviction that they can be solved. Emotions are not allowed to run wild until they become pathological, and compensations are not sought because the adolescent has been taught to meet life's difficulties with vigor and intelligence.

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CHAPTER XVII

HABITS

IN discussing habit, two fundamental facts are of tremendous importance: first, that habits are constantly being formed and established by children, and secondly, that these habits will play a decisively important rôle in the weal and woe of the youngsters.

One difficulty in the rearing of children is that the problem seems so immense and so perplexing that parents—even some thoughtful ones—fear to tackle it, lest by interference they make matters worse. "The more I read the more perplexed I get," said one anxious mother recently. "There are so many chances to make mistakes that I do not know what to do. Consequently, much of the time I do nothing. I just hope." This, of course, is merely giving up the job and trusting to fate.

Training children is undoubtedly a serious and by no means easy undertaking, but if the underlying principles are grasped, the details may be fitted more easily into the general scheme. At present we are concerned with only one phase of the large problem of child training, and that phase is the absolute certainty that boys and girls will establish habits of action. The vital question is, then, what habits will be established?

Few are aware of the wide reach of habit and, consequently, not many know the immense importance of this psychological factor in planning for recreation, for behavior, and for work. To indicate only two or three paths which habit takes and from which many side trails lead, we may mention thinking, and the large variety of emotional reactions that too often end in mental disturbance requiring psychological or medical treatment.

Let us now take up for a moment the first important factor in habits, namely, that they are being constantly formed and fixed. Certain habits, of course, begin in the nursery. The first that suggest themselves as starting here are those of discipline and behavior. Postponing the establishment of discipline is a serious mistake because the longer it is delayed the more difficult is the task. Every year adds to the types of behavior which must be brought under discipline, but the habit of reasonable docility is itself important in child training. Let us delay for a moment now to discuss briefly "reasonable docility."

To make children obey merely for the sake of showing authority is about as bad child training as can be conceived, and yet this is what many parents do. Demands for obedience are too often irrational and selfish. What the child wants to do annoys or inconveniences adults. Therefore it is forbidden. Quite likely a tantrum or two brings permission because the tantrum is worse than the act. Thus the authority of the home becomes a joke. The child learns how to "work" his parents and discipline does not exist.

To be educational, discipline should be respected by the children subjected to it. We do not mean that children will always understand and appreciate the reasons for denial of their requests. What we do mean is that the home and school atmosphere must be such that the children will feel that favors are not refused thoughtlessly.

Notice that we are not discussing discipline. Habit is our theme, but in the early years discipline and habit are so intimately interwoven that they can hardly be separated.

This is definitely true in the nursery and to a large extent, also, during the entire preschool period. Habit begins with discipline, but discipline should be appreciative of the native urges of child life.

Fixing in children effective habits—habits into which the occupations of succeeding years may fit without profound changes in the habits themselves—is, of course, one of the purposes in child training. This requires intelligent and thoughtful planning by parents. It is also evident that knowledge of the psychology of children is needed if the planning is to be done intelligently.

Clearly, if young people are to get ready to accomplish anything, there must be a reasonable division of their time between work and recreation. What commonly happens is that no attention is given to this question until an age is reached when parents think that their children should begin to look toward the future, and then they try to force an immediate change of habits. This frequently results in an eruption in the home to which the parents yield as to an inevitable necessity. They give up the task and talk about the changes which have come over the youth of the land. This is the defense mechanism creating excuses.

As a matter of fact, the desirable habits of adolescence should be planned for during the preschool age. Habits are not like long trousers, to be put on when a boy reaches a certain age. They are a matter of growth and development.

In the early years, at least, the only distinction which children make between play and work is enjoyment. What they enjoy, we have said, is play and what they do not like to do is work. Yet a storybook of history or of science, adapted to the age of the child and written so as to appeal to the childish mind, is just as much fun, when not continued too long, as is any other sort of a game.

Parents should bear in mind, however, that certain types of children tend by nature to be too seclusive. To make a success in life a boy or girl must, on the one hand, be a social animal and, on the other, interested in the world of thought. We see here, as we have seen before, the futility of rules. The individual characteristics of the child must be understood. Is he timid? Does he prefer the shelter of the home and of his mother? Then parents should plan for social intercourse and also for the rough and tumble treatment that boys give one another literally, and girls figuratively. A child who is kept in cotton batting will never become a man or woman.

We said above that habits cannot suddenly be put into a child when the proper age has been reached. We emphasized the fact that habits must grow and develop as the child grows. To be concrete, habits suitable to the adolescent period should be started during the preschool age, and the preparation for adolescent habits should be continued until that time is reached.

This statement may easily be misunderstood. It is, therefore, necessary to give a definite illustration.

If a child reaches adolescence without wanting to spend a part of the day or evening reading something that is worth while, it is doubtful whether the desire can ever be developed. This is a serious statement but it is true. How, then, is this desire to be started? Most parents throw the problem back upon the school. What they cannot do with one or two boys and girls they expect the teacher to do with fifty. Not very intelligent, is it? What, then, is the solution of the problem? We have already indicated it. During early childhood, reading should be made as much fun for the children as any other sport. It should be a game which begins with pictures before a child is able to read and continues as an evening sport as he begins to pick out his words.

It goes without saying that if this game is to be successful, the parents must enjoy it as much as the children. Here is where much of the trouble begins. Many parents have never learned to enjoy reading and, consequently, they cannot teach their children that pleasure.

We have used reading to illustrate habit formation because it shows so clearly that habits are not, and rarely if ever can be, sudden acquisitions. Children who learn to enjoy their storybooks and who continue to find pleasure in books suited to their mental growth will want to read during the adolescent period.

Several things should be remembered in developing the reading habit. First, no game should be continued too long. Secondly, a game cannot be forced. Suggestion is the psychological method and suggestion means planning to produce a certain effect. Reading is not an exception to the general rule. It cannot be too often repeated that intelligent child training consists in producing such conditions as will make a child want to do what the parent or teacher wishes. Herein is both the difficulty and fun of rearing and teaching children.

The problem thus becomes a game at which parents and teachers alike play. They are, so to speak, pitted against the children in a contest of strategy. The children want to do nothing in particular except to have "fun." If they were ordered to play ball, the game would be as hateful to them as any other occupation in which they are compelled to engage. It seems to be child nature, and human nature as well, to dislike what one is ordered to do.

The development of the habit of reading what is worth while, of making it a successful contestant for the time and interest of a child, is thus seen to be the problem of creating an environment that will not only suggest reading but will suggest it so irresistibly that the child cannot escape the desire. It is rather noticeable in this connection that reading usually runs in families. Parents who read books that are worth while, consciously or unconsciously, create a reading atmosphere by the remarks that they make, by the questions that they raise, and by the other reading stimuli that they produce.

We have referred, in an earlier chapter, to the reading habit and we now repeat it, not merely because it is one which will appeal to all thoughtful parents but also because if this habit is established a good many other valuable habits are provided for. Among these are the use of leisure time and the ability to entertain oneself. One of the most desirable habits to acquire is this ability to entertain oneself. This does not mean that boys and girls should withdraw within themselves. Desire for social intercourse and social pleasure is a characteristic of youth. Only in rare instances, however, does this gregarious urge need to be encouraged. Too commonly, continuous, perpetual excitement is demanded. And one reason for this is that few boys and girls know how to occupy their time pleasantly and profitably when alone.

We must remember that we are trying to understand and sketch some of the more fundamental habits—those which in certain respects are the basis of others. Pleasure in reading books that are worth while we have found to be one of these habits, not alone because of its instruction but also because of the pleasure that it gives and because it fosters the feeling that information about matters of life may be got in this way and in no other. It greatly enlarges a child's experience.

Further, if one thoughtfully observes human affairs to-day one can hardly fail to notice that scientific questions and political matters can no longer be settled by what we call common sense. We are not now concerned so much with the information that boys and girls get by reading scientific literature and discussing political questions in unpartisan books and journals as we are interested in the attitude of mind acquired. This mental attitude is a matter of habit.

A teacher of college students cannot fail to be impressed with the credulity of young men and women on the subjects of a scientific nature and also with their close adherence to the views of the "herd." Their habits of thought are the conventional ones amid which they have been reared. But this does not produce efficient thinking or acting.

It is generally admitted that parents, without wishing to handicap their children, do, nevertheless, train their youngsters to be second editions of themselves so far as opinions and beliefs are concerned. It is difficult for adults to realize that the world of thought is moving to-day with disconcerting rapidity. Few adults can keep up with the changes for the simple reason that their habits of thought are fixed and cannot be altered. This is the nature of habit. Habits of thought are as unalterable as the opium or morphine habit, and for exactly the same reason. Both go back finally to physiological changes. If parents could only be impressed with this fact, they would be more alert in planning for the habits of their children.

Now, though no subject of study encourages a critical attitude of mind as much as the sciences, neither these studies nor any others will accomplish much by themselves. The effective method would be for parents to follow along with their children in their grammar school, high school and college work. Is this asking too much? We fear that it is for many parents. An easier method, one that requires less of a rupture with adults' habits, is probably necessary. Let us look at another phase of the question.

Your children are going to face a wholly different world from the one with which you are familiar. Whether they go into business or into one of the professions, ability to think is going to be a vital asset. Let us illustrate with an actual case which has just come to the attention of the writer.

Two brothers, about thirty-five years of age, inherited a valuable men's clothing business from their father. The firm's name had to be reckoned with by all competitors. Their father had been successful and had left his two sons well off, besides passing on to them an established business that was paying large dividends.

The two sons moved the business to a "more important" street where they could draw a "better class of trade." As a matter of fact they moved just beyond the "dead line," namely, a little farther out than the people whose trade they expected were accustomed to go at that time for trading purposes.

On account of this their business lasted less than a year. They were compelled to dispose of their goods at a forced sale and both of these men, now about forty years of age, are clerks in clothing stores. In less than a year they had wrecked a good business and lost the money which their father had left them.

The remark of one of these brothers to the writer is significant. It shows that he at least is aware of the cause of the failure.

"We should have known better than to move out there," he said. "We were left a good business, but it was with a class of trade that was accustomed to buy farther down town. Whether we should have moved at all is now a question in my mind, but if we did move, the new location should have been only one or two blocks out. I cannot say that we were definitely and consciously after a better class of trade. The simple fact is that we did not think the matter out clearly. We did not get the facts before acting. It was a terrible mistake because it wrecked our career."

Now, getting facts before acting or not getting them, is a matter of habit. The notion that one can use one's mind effectively on special occasions, when an emergency arises, and not at other times is a popular error. Even the ability to recognize an emergency is based on habit.

Of course we assume at least average intelligence. Without that one can do little. But with fair intelligence the use that one will make of it in a given situation will depend largely on the use that one has made of it in previous situations. This, as will be seen at once, goes back to habit. A young man has either acquired the habit of getting the data needed for intelligent, thoughtful action or he has not developed that habit. And, again, he has got the habit of examining problems of action to determine whether facts which he does not have are needed or he has not acquired that habit. The brothers who acted on unintelligent impulse had not developed the habit of suspended judgment and investigation. Therefore, the result that we have seen followed.

The illustration which we have given is from business. Examples from law, medicine and the other professions might easily have been selected. The important point is that habit pervades the entire mental life. With good intelligence, effectiveness depends on habits which have been acquired during childhood and youth.

We must remember, also, that habits are specific and not general. There is no such thing as a habit of efficiency.

Certain traits that make for efficiency may be acquired but if they are not developed during childhood it is doubtful if they will ever become effective in the life and work of the young man or adult. Habits grow, with or without supervision. Consequently, the importance of thoughtful planning and organization in the home becomes evident.

We have emphasized the powerful influence of habit in adjustments to the working and social world. Its significance for a proficient life of work and leisure has been briefly sketched. But no one can find joy either in work or recreation if the emotional habits are out of gear.

The chief cause of the pathological reactions to which we referred in the early part of this chapter is the failure during childhood to get the habit of carrying on and winning out. The habit of sidestepping unpleasant tasks, duties or requirements—escaping from reality—leads to excuses which do not satisfy even the one who gives them, to illnesses that soothe with only the sweet anguish of counterfeit pleasure, and to a feeling of maladjustment which will not be completely or continuously downed. This more or less suppressed feeling of discontentment is the cause of the mental disturbance. The excuses and, in the case of young women, the illnesses, are habits of reaction—acquired ways of behaving by which situations, unpleasant at the moment, are evaded and the foundation for one or another of the psychoneuroses is laid. Two illustrations, one a boy and the other a girl, come to the mind of the writer.

The girl of whom we are thinking is now twenty-one years of age and in a sanitarium. She comes from a good family and would ordinarily be said to have been "well brought up." Her mother is by no means weak and she has always been interested in her children. But she did not understand the dangers of the nervous temperament of this daughter. Her attempts at discipline were chiefly "talking" which approximated pretty closely to what is called "nagging."

Though the mother meant to be firm, and thought that she was, quite commonly after telling her daughter what to do in a situation which required mature judgment the child did what she pleased. Crying, whining, and begging were in the day's program and, after much disputing, usually brought the desired result. When this child was present there was no repose.

The girl never read, except by the "catch as catch can" method. Even occasional restful peace was unknown to her. She had no emotional stability or poise. At times she was entertaining, as excitable girls are likely to be, but more commonly she was irritating because of continuous dissatisfaction with what she was doing. She always wanted to do something else. Change, something new, almost anything for the sake of a new excitement seemed to be her wish. Quiet, firm discipline would have saved her from the nervous state that has now sent her to a private hospital.

The second case is that of a boy of fifteen whose mother, greatly disturbed, came to the writer to tell her sorrowful story. We can give only a brief sketch of what she said, but the first, if not the most important, fact was that neither the father nor the mother knew that anything was wrong until the boy remained away from home for two nights and then returned with the story that he had been kidnaped and held captive in a vacant house. The night before his return, his captors being absent, he succeeded in freeing himself from the ropes with which he was tied and escaped.

The policemen, whom the mother at once notified, questioned the boy and were not convinced. They asked him to show them the house in which he was kept but, after a long search, the boy said that he was not sure of its location. It was dark, he told them, and he was taken in a closed car. Finally, however, he admitted that he had made up the story. Why he did it he would not tell the officers, but the reason was evident from the conversation with his mother. To cut a rather long story short, the boy had been allowed to have his own way and, though the parents had not discovered it, he had come to believe that what he wanted to do should not be interfered with. He had developed social habits so offensive that his schoolmates ignored him.

What was the result? He determined to become a hero. He would be kidnaped and escape. That was an adventure which would give him a reputation that the boys would envy, and the girls? Well, they would adore him on account of his bravery. All of this, and much more, the boy admitted later in a very personal conference with the writer. It was an enlightening conversation.

We cannot repeat too often that in the home and school we are making personalities. We also see once more that child development is an all-sided growth. One phase of training cannot be adequately dealt with apart from other phases. Discipline, the original nature of the child—whether it is inclined to avoid the sterner facts of life—obedience, if it happens to be built that way, secret violation of requirements, more common than parents like to think, the various devices of both winsome and irritating children to secure their ends, all of these tendencies and many more play their rôle in the formation of habits; and the integrated product is the personality. For better or for worse, in the home and school, the future of children is being settled. Problem boys and girls become problem men and women unless parents and teachers comprehend the immensity and intricate complexity of their task and inform themselves of the devious but fascinating ways of childhood.

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CHAPTER XVIII

THE NERVOUS CHILD

NERVOUSNESS has become so common in recent years that it might almost be called the fashionable disease. This is especially true of women. One need only mention some of its outward manifestations to see the truth of this statement. Headaches, exhaustion, when one has done nothing to warrant it, mental confusion, inability to concentrate the attention upon one's work, and continual demand for excitement, are some of the ways in which excessive nervousness shows itself.

Those who call this affliction mental, and then drop it, state only a partial truth. To be sure, the mental attitude plays an important rôle in nervous disorders which are not caused by cerebral disintegration of one sort or another, but the mental attitude itself frequently has a cause and explanation in the home environment of childhood. An exceptional woman may, with effort, overcome the effects of misdirected affection or careless attention of her parents during earlier days, but few are capable of understanding the facts or of dealing with the situation even if they appreciate the need.

"The cause of neurasthenia," says Dr. William A. White,[1] "is usually put down as overstrain, mental or physical. The so-called strenuous life of the present day is believed to be responsible for many cases. The strenuous life, however, has offered material for criticism for hundreds of years. Cicero wrote against it in the old Roman days. What, to my mind, is more characteristic of the times, not in opposition to all other times, but in distinction from the period of the immediate past, is idleness, especially of the women. The women of the well-to-do classes have literally nothing to do."

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[1] William A. White, *Outlines of Psychiatry* (Nervous and Mental Diseases Publishing Co.).

As a bit of corroborative evidence of the view which Dr. White has expressed, observation shows that neurasthenia is especially noticeable among the well-to-do and wealthy classes. The poor are comparatively exempt from this affliction. They have no time for fashionable diseases. For them life is real and its problems must be met.

Now it assumes too much clarity of thought to expect a woman to say to herself, "My expectations and ambitions have been daydreams out of touch with reality. I should find something that is actually worth doing and make some of the little things big." The writer has known a few women who have recovered from neurasthenia by taking an active interest in social settlement work, and one who had "never known a well day" was cured by becoming a private secretary.

These cases, however, are comparatively few because clear thinking is rare. So women usually yield to the temptation to be sick. To try to escape from their inner suffering, "they often engage in a delirious round of social functions," continues Dr. White, "and break down apparently from over exertion in keeping up their social duties. This, however, is only the obvious cause; the real cause lies much deeper. Being somewhat physically tired, having failed, having no real interest, they are indifferent to all except their personal suffering. Exertion is only exertion and serves no special ends, fits in nowhere as a link in a well-connected, coherent chain of events. So they end by being unable to exert themselves at all. Even getting up and dressing is too much; they stay in bed."

Naturally, Dr. White's description does not exactly fit every case. Some women who read this get up at eight o'clock and they will, therefore, say that it does not apply to them. This satisfying reply, however, only illustrates the inability of many people to see a point even when it is sharp and turned directly toward them.

But we are not interested in adults. If, in their own opinion, the world revolves, or should revolve around them, if their hopes and ambitions are shattered, if they are gossips, suspicious, carping critics, if their useless lives do not satisfy even themselves, and if by eternally complaining instead of acting they are laying the foundations of hypochondria, it is probably too late to produce a cure. Too late, because they have never been trained to get a good perspective of life, to see things, including themselves, in the right proportions. We are interested in the causes of their present condition and in the training which children should receive to escape their plight. An illustration will show the mistakes of the usual treatment and indicate the method to be followed.

The young woman of whom we are thinking is pretty well described above. The only omission necessary is shattered ambitions. These she never had, which, incidentally, was a part of the fault in her training. She is a gossiping, suspicious, nervous wife and mother, without interests beyond the small talk of the next bridge party. Yet she comes of exceptionally good stock and her mother had the best intentions in rearing her. Certain rather frequent home conditions, however, were noticeable during her childhood. Her mother was "nervous" and, since the family was only well-to-do, she was, at times, without a housemaid. This made her nervous illnesses more frequent with the usual effect upon the child. Only one method of control was used, namely, sharp reproof and prohibition. While neither parent was unkind, the home was always a nervous place. Rarely, if ever, was there repose. There were few children's books, and the newspaper was all the reading which the parents did. Social engagements were sandwiched in between recoveries from nervous illnesses. The situation is regretfully common: a well-meaning but tired mother with frayed nerves, reacting to the joyous noise of a healthy youngster in the way in which ragged nerves are likely to react. No repose, no time between social engagements and nervous illnesses to read with her child in children's books; scant association with other children because they were thought to be unsuitable playmates; control through sharp commands. You see the vicious circle of nervous orders, overlooking disobedience on account of fatigue and lack of knowledge, absence of children's books and reading interests; continuous nervous excitement, no questions thrown out to guide development, no calmness in the home. Is it to be wondered that the child reacted nervously and developed fragile nerves? In such a home it could not be otherwise.

As in all other phases of development, the physical and the mental contribute each its share to the final product. "For preventing nervousness in the child," says Dr. H. T. Patrick, "nothing is so effective as toughening the body and mind. . . . A child who is made to have hard muscles, strong lungs and a vigorous digestion . . . who can endure disappointment, who can be 'crossed' without a tantrum, and who habitually obeys, is building a bulwark against 'nerves,' and the one who is not easily frightened, has self-control, and a budding courage has nipped half a dozen neuroses in the bud."[2]

At times, of course, heredity is in part to blame for the nervous antics of the child, but usually the training is at fault. Hereditary defects commonly lead to something worse. We, therefore, turn to the conditions of early life which tend to produce the adult, disagreeable alike to herself and others, whom we have just described.

As we have already said, an only child is pitted against heavy odds in its development, and the reason is clear. A single child is humored and petted until the world seems to revolve for its entertainment.

This discussion, however, is not concerned primarily with the only child. Nervous irritability, popularly known as neurasthenia, is our theme and we have mentioned the only child because it offers the best single illustration of the cause of nervousness. Nervous children are spoiled children, and nervous women are those who were spoiled in childhood.

The beginnings of "nerves" leading to neurasthenias of one sort or another are plainly visible to those who are observant. Discordant emotions are always found. Envy, jealousy, suspicion, or determination to have one's way means a soft baby of twenty-one or more in a world that was not built for soft babies. It has not enough padding. An irritable adult was so carefully protected during childhood from the sharp points of its tiny world that they never made a puncture. A spasm or tantrum was performed, and the mother hurried for cotton batting to smooth the rough edges of annoyed existence.

To be sure, some children are sick and should be living out-of-doors under the care of a competent physician. But even the sick should lead a disciplined life. Regularity in the things that make for health, and obedience to those who know what should be done, are a part of the process of recovery. Many children, however, are made frail and sick because of the lack of intelligent and, if you please, enforced home guidance.

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[2] "How Not To Be Nervous" (American Medical Association Press).

When we find a problem child we usually discover also a nervous one. Stupid children are not problems. We know what to do with them. It is the unusually intelligent who make the trouble. Maladjustment is a characteristic of problem children, and failure to make the adaptations in which others succeed produces nervous irritation.

A recent survey of certain schools in New York City showed that when the education was made to fit the individual child, problem children practically disappeared. Those who had been dissatisfied because they could not fit into the educational machine became contented in an educational organization which was adjusted to their abilities and their interests.

Nervous children are being made when their neural machinery does not run smoothly in the home or school environment. Rough roads, you know, in time, will shake an automobile to pieces.

The environment of a child, however, may be "smooth" in two quite different ways. It may yield to caprice or it may be made to fit the individual boy or girl. The first kind of "smoothness" produces nervous children who grow into infantile men or women. The second sort attracts the attention of the child, awakens his interest, and aids in stabilizing his emotions because it is adapted to the conscious and unconscious urge of his growing and changing personality.

The child is not an aggregate of mental states. He is an integrated personality with exceedingly delicate adjustments. This is the explanation of the importance of everything that goes into the making of a personality. It is also the reason why some topics which have been treated in separate chapters must be referred to here.

Emotional eruptions, for example, play havoc with the nervous system, and an undisciplined child exhibits emotional outbreaks when parents, in an unguarded moment of intelligence, try to utilize an authority which has grown rusty from disuse.

Parents yield to the whims of their children because of misdirected affection and on account of their own incompetence. At the moment, giving permission seems to cause less disturbance than refusing. These parents do not know that they are preparing future troubles both for themselves and their children. They are giving the youngsters the notion that whatever the world offers is theirs for the asking. Since this is not true in the big world outside of the home, the women into whom their girls grow have expectations that will never be gratified. Never having been taught to face refusal and disappointments, these girls and women take refuge in nervous ill health. This, we have seen, is what is meant by escaping from the realities of life. As children they learned to think that everything in the world was prepared for their pleasure. Ask or, if necessary, cry, and it shall be given.

Every teacher is flooded with requests for special treatment for one pupil or another. "My child is sickly and should not be required to do such work." Well, if the child is really sick it should not be in school. The hospital, or at least the country, is the place for sick children. Getting excused from work cultivates the excuse habit.

If reality is ever to be faced, the child must learn to meet it in the home. Disappointments are what we make them, and children who do not learn to endure them pleasantly will escape from them by devious and pathological ways when they have grown up. They retire within themselves, become morose, feel unappreciated and perhaps abused. Men will be irritable, uncommunicative and uncompanionable; women will flee to the shelter of chronic invalidism.

Boys are less likely than girls to reach this egocentric condition because, among themselves, they are less tolerant of selfishness. On the playground a boy who is not observant of the rights of others soon learns that the world does not revolve around him. An oratorical chastisement in language that would shock his mother, or a sound pommelling, soon teaches him that reality is sadly real and that if he is going to get along in the world he must adapt himself to it. A wise parent lets him take his punishment without unnecessary comment, whether in the school or on the playground, that he may learn that some realities, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, are unalterable.

"What's the matter with your eye?" asked a father the other evening of his eleven-year-old son. After some hesitation the boy admitted that he got it in a fight.

"What was the fight about?" persisted the father.

"Why, I wanted to play ball and there was one too many so John and I drew lots."

"Then what happened? Boys do not usually fight over drawing lots."

"Well, I told him I was going to play anyhow because I was older."

"In other words, John won the lot and then you did not stand by the agreement. Is that it?"

"I guess so."

"Well, son, it looks to me as though you got what was coming to you. Don't you think so?" But the boy was already convinced by the thrashing which he had received.

Girls' methods of dealing with one another are not so drastic. Consequently, they do not receive the training from one another that boys get. This is one of the reasons, though not the only one, why men are less likely to seek refuge in nervous ills. As children they are forced on the playground to face reality and take the consequences of their actions. As a bit of evidence for the importance of this playground training, women who were "tomboys" in their childhood are less likely than their social friends to flee to the refuge of illness when they are women. They go after what they want, but if they do not get it they continue to "play the game." They are "good sports."

If parents themselves would be better sports their young hopefuls would be less nervous. It is not surprising that children "get on the nerves" of adults. Consequently, parents and teachers are hardly to be censured if they find their children or pupils at times a little tiring. This feeling, however, is certain to have a nervous effect upon the children who sense with almost uncanny accuracy the mental atmosphere which surrounds them.

The natural reaction of a tired mother or teacher is to reprove or forbid. At times, again, in sheer desperation, permission is given recklessly. Amid these inconsistencies a child does not know what to do. He is tossed from reproof and prohibition to senseless permission; and you may be sure that he knows the reason for the favor when it is granted. He is quite aware that the permission has been given because you have "lost your head" and have given up the job.

Children often live in a confusion of orders which the parent or teacher does not expect will be obeyed. At least they would not expect it had they but reflected for a moment. Not infrequently the orders are unreasonable. They are merely the expression of a tired and nervous brain.

This nervous tension is quickly sensed by children, and the effect upon them is to irritate their own delicately organized nerves. An illustration will show how true this is.

A mother consulted the writer about her boy and girl. Up to the time of the conference her children had slept well, been easy to control, and were happy. Suddenly, as the mother said, all this changed. The children were restless at night, lost their appetite, were listless and irritable as well as irritating. Everything that they did—even such necessary things as dressing and undressing—was done with opposition and often with tears. The joyous health and behavior which had characterized them was gone.

A short conversation revealed the cause. The husband of the woman was worried about his business. The dates of the change in the children and of the time when the anxiety of the father began to show itself in his insistence upon economies which revealed their financial dangers to his wife, coincided so closely that the explanation of the nervousness of the children was clear.

Nothing had been said to the youngsters about the parents' fear, but the children had sensed the difference in the atmosphere of the home. The worried father and mother could not hide their anxiety. Though the parents were not aware of a change in their behavior toward their children, they were less consistent in their control. Noise at play, even joyous laughter and questions were rebuked. Of course the children reacted in the only way that could be expected to the change in mood.

At times family life degenerates into continuous controversy which has not only no end but also no result. We must withdraw the statement that futile controversy in the home has no result. It always produces selfish, exacting, nervous children.

In the worst cases—and unfortunately they are many—the controversy ends with appeals, threats, tears, outbreaks of temper, and ineffective punishments which have no other result than to fray still further the already ragged nerves of the children.

All that we have said about the home can be applied with only slight change to the school. Perhaps the only word which must be omitted from our description is the tears. The writer has listened in the schools to appeals, threats, fits of temper, and has seen ineffective punishment applied. The most common of these unpsychological punishments is to revoke privileges or to compel the offenders to remain in school during the recreation period when they need the air and change.

Now it is an interesting and, to some perhaps, a curious fact that children rather enjoy these controversies with their parents and teachers. The explanation of their enjoyment is that they see and clearly understand the significance of the temper and threats. These outbursts mean that control has been lost. Even the punishment is not without its compensating pleasure because it is evidence of a weak pretense of an authority which the children know has gone.

Yet, in spite of the wicked pleasure of these knowing children this inconsistent and irrational treatment is undermining the foundation structure of their nervous system. They become self-centered, self-conscious in an unfortunate way, and intolerant of control. When we say self-conscious in an unfortunate way, we mean that they are convinced that they have a power which will not be so influential when they leave their home and school. This later disappointment will be one of the factors contributing to their nervous disintegration. It will be the cause of the moods and sulkiness of men and of the headaches and hysteria in its many forms in women. Each one, in maturity as in childhood, will try to avoid reality. As children they succeeded in a measure, but as adults the only means of escaping from the facts of life is by the circuitous route of sickness for the women and withdrawal within one's moody, temperamental self for the men.

It is, however, the immediate effect of moods, temper, threats, appeals, and controversies upon the children that interests us now. Those who have reached manhood and womanhood with well-stabilized nerves are unlikely to give way to the strains of life. These are the ones whom we call "well-balanced."

We have already indicated some of the results of moods, tensions, and temperament in the home and school. It remains to give a brief glimpse of the reverse side of the picture.

Reproof should never be given in any other form than as advice and counsel. To rebuke, quickly grows into a habit, and a child who is frequently upbraided becomes adapted to the customary censure. He accepts it as one of the necessary and inevitable conditions of childhood and ceases to give attention. He also fails to develop the self-respect which is one of the essentials of nervous poise. He feels himself an underling pitted against the world of unreasonable and troublesome adults.

Interference with the behavior of boys and girls is, of course, necessary at times, but it should never be applied thoughtlessly or in anger. The same courtesy is due children as one shows adults. They should not only feel that they are loved but also that they are respected, and respect is not inferred from habitual reproof and angry threats.

The successes of the young rather than their failures should be emphasized. This awakens self-respect while quickening the desire for achievement; and those who are trying to do something worth while have no time to get nervous. But it is the failures of children rather than their successes that attract the attention of parents and teachers, because of the trouble which the failures cause. One may notice success and be pleased, but it does not seem to demand the proof that it has been observed which failure requires. Time is short and we are busy, so we assume that virtue will bring its own reward. Yet it doesn't always do so. Unless, however, they are made aware that success has attracted sufficient attention to be worth a word of commendation, children are likely to think that it doesn't amount to much. But they are never permitted to get this notion about failure.

When interference with the behavior of a child is really necessary, it should be applied in a way that will leave no doubt of its necessity. The interfering force—call it punishment if you will—should fall upon the offender so vigorously as to leave no question about the gravity of the offense. There should be no preliminary rebukes or threats.

Interference with the behavior of children gains in value, however, by its rarity. Restraint or punishment is like any other medicine. If you take it continuously the effect is lost. One becomes inured to it. But down among the neurones of the nervous system a change is being made that will be revealed in the discord of the behavior of the boy and girl.

Briefly summarizing, remove the leash from children but do not throw it away. Give them freedom and show them that you observe with pleasure the things which they do that are worth while. Give permission generously but never yield to sullenness, entreaty or whining.

Be sure that the home is a peaceful place except for the joyous activity of the children. Never call from one room to another. Never raise your voice above a tone that indicates composure. Do not repress children merely for your own convenience. "Don't" is unpsychological. Make positive suggestions and see that the child has the things needed to carry them out. Then be interested in the result of the activity. Have quiet periods when you read to, or with, your children. Do not turn this over to the nursemaid, but select a time when the children have nothing else to do.

Let the youngsters have fresh air in abundance and see that the needed sleep and proper diet are not lacking. Make no appeals or threats. If, as occasionally is likely, they transgress the limits of behavior for children, let the punishment be such that they will not mistake its meaning.

The schoolroom is often a place where children are looking for a chance to do something and the teacher alert to prevent it. The teacher who must be watchful is a failure. Obedience is not an end in itself. A school has good discipline when the conditions are favorable to its work. If the children are so interested that they question and talk without permission, that is good discipline. Autocratic control suggests disobedience and sharp reprimands make nervous children. The sensitive ones are especially liable to develop nervousness when reproved or ridiculed by word or look.

Once more, also, the importance of the voice must be emphasized. Teachers should be sure that, in their case at least, it does not rack the nerves. Its quality has immense power to influence and to irritate. It persuades, often to the amazement of those who yield, or it rasps the delicate neurones almost beyond endurance. If some teachers knew how disagreeable their voices are, how they "get on the nerves" of those compelled by the ancient pedagogic law to stay and listen, they would work night and day to make them less unpleasant.

Finally, above all perhaps, let youngsters be boys and girls with all of the rights and privileges that go with childhood. A free but disciplined life will make a stable nervous system which will face reality instead of trying to escape by nervous subterfuges and weakening compensations.

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CHAPTER XIX

NATURE AND NURTURE

HEREDITY is an unquestionable fact with which we must reckon. Our organs, muscles, nervous system and functions, all have a hereditary history. Man is what he is because of the long ages through which he has passed in the process of development. In addition to this racial history, every child has an individual heritage which separates him from every other human being. Family inheritance is as fundamental as racial heredity. But this is the beginning and not the end of training.

The comparative importance of heredity and environment is raised in every class in psychology and child study. This question can be answered at present only imperfectly. The study of heredity is adding much to our information from year to year but the gaps are still numerous and wide.

Discussion of the influence of heredity and environment has exhibited much confused thinking. Do we know the effect of encouragement to show themselves given to abilities by the environment?

The statement of a prominent zoölogist is worth recalling in this connection. "The resounding assertion," says Herbert S. Jennings in his *Prometheus,* "that biology informs us that environment can bring out nothing whatever but the hereditary characters . . . is perfectly idle and empty. If true, it is merely by definition: anything that the environment brings out is hereditary. But from this we learn nothing as to what a new environment will bring out. It may bring out characteristics that have never before appeared in the race."

A number of investigations of this problem have been made. So far as human things are concerned, those of Francis Galton, F. A. Woods, E. L. Thorndike, J. McKeen Cattell, and Havelock Ellis are among the most important. The conclusions of all except the last two emphasize the influence of heredity.

Cattell's "Statistical Study of American Men of Science,"[1] on the other hand, is not so conclusive. Among his conclusions is the statement that "the main factors in producing scientific and other forms of intellectual performance seem to be density of population, wealth, opportunity, institutions and social traditions and ideals."

Density of population is clearly a complex cause that includes a good many incentives, among which would probably be an unusual number of men of exceptional ability whose books and reputation would be a stimulation to the young. Opportunity, again, of which Cattell speaks, would include library facilities and every other means, both of stimulating and of affording the opportunity to react to the incentives thus created.

Some of these studies have indicated a fact of great importance in appraising the comparative value of heredity and environment. Genius is not infrequently located in time and place. A large number of men of genius have appeared at a certain period and in certain localities.

Cattell,[2] for example, in his "Statistical Study of Eminent Men," finds a pause in the fourteenth century followed at first by gradual improvement and then by a remarkable increase in the number of geniuses at the end of the fifteenth century. Cattell's study also showed that "the latter part of the seventeenth century was a sterile period, followed by a revival culminating in the French Revolution." Germany again, "for one short period in the fifteenth century rivaled France and England, but in the two following centuries lagged far behind, to rise with great rapidity in the eighteenth century."

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[1] J. McKeen Cattell, *Science,* Vol. 24, p. 735.

[2] Old *Popular Science Monthly,* Vol. 62, p. 359.

Havelock Ellis[3] has observed similar conditions. "It would seem," he says, "that we are here in the presence of two factors; a spontaneous rhythmical rise and fall in the production of genius, so that a period of what is improperly called 'decadence' is followed by one of expansive activity; and also, at the same time, the stimulating influence of great historical events, calling out latent intellectual energy." Ellis' study seems likewise to emphasize time and place in the production of geniuses. Kent, for example, which was prolific in eminent men during the English Renaissance, lost its predominance in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Yet, according to Ellis, if Kent does not stand at the head of English counties in its total contribution to English genius, it is almost the first. "Although no other county could be found to furnish so remarkable an instance of great intellectual fertility, followed by intellectual decadence, without decrease in population and prosperity, this case is enough to show that we can by no means assume that the intellectual fertility of a county in one century is any certain index to its general intellectual fertility." One cannot help wondering whether the intellectual families left Kent or whether other conditions of an environmental nature made the difference.

Such facts are significant because they suggest the possibility of men of genius stimulating those of more moderate ability who, by tremendous work, have accomplished much. This, as we have said, is only a suggested possibility but the inference cannot be ignored. It puts a definite emphasis upon the influence of the environment. We must not be understood, however, in saying this, to mean that a one hundred thousand dollar man can be made out of a twenty-five cent boy. Nature, without doubt, sets a limit.

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[3] Havelock Ellis, *A Study of British Genius* (Houghton Mifflin).

Quite a number of studies have also been made of the family histories of degenerates as well as of those who have been famous. The most important of the degenerate families are the Jukes and Kallikaks. These two families have a long history of crime, pauperism, immorality, and disease.

One factor, however, exerting a powerful influence among these families has been largely overlooked by those who discuss their history. This was emphasized by Dugdale, the first biographer of the Jukes, but seems to have been passed over in the more recent literature. It is that *the Jukes created a vicious environment in which the children of succeeding generations grew up.*

Other environmental factors are also important in this connection; one, the reputation of members of this notorious family, and another, their inability to obtain positions which would support them. The second, of course, is the result of the first.

The family name, according to Dugdale, had come to be used as a term of reproach, and a more recent writer in *The Jukes in 1915,* says that "if any one in the community commits even the slightest indiscretion, he is told that 'he is acting like a Juke.'" The same investigator also says that "the owner of one factory kept a list of Juke names in his office. When any one applied for employment, and his family name appeared in the list, he was refused work." This attitude toward members of the Juke family would add tremendously to the deteriorating effect of the environment. Indeed it is difficult to see how a person with no more than ordinary strength of character could rise above it.

In reading *The Jukes in 1915*, one can hardly fail to be impressed with the number of the descendants of this family who became respectable and self-supporting in spite of the handicap of their family connections. This is especially striking when one bears in mind what we have already said about the perpetuation of a demoralizing environment and the social reputation of members of the family.

It is quite possible, of course, to say that such variations are to be expected according to the doctrine of heredity and that, consequently, the improved environment in individual cases cannot be offered as an explanation. If one believes that heredity is the sole controlling force, one must, of course, accept this view. The cases, however, in which a man or woman became a respected and self-respecting citizen, training legitimate children who were of average intelligence, active and of good repute in the community, are too numerous to fail to make an impression upon an unprejudiced reader of *The Jukes in 1915*.

The present writer, as has already been said, believes in heredity. But when the author of *The Jukes in 1915* says: "An analysis of Chart II shows that licentiousness is probably carried in the germ plasm of both chaste ancestors," one cannot help feeling that he is claiming and proving too much. A deteriorated nervous system can undoubtedly be produced and, perhaps, be transmitted by heredity because of disease or other causes. This impaired nervous system may show itself in any one of several ways. It may result in worthlessness, licentiousness, or crime. But to say that licentiousness specifically is carried in the germ plasm of ancestors is so large a claim that one cannot help questioning the scientific impartiality of the investigator.

One case emphasized by Dugdale is worth special mention. This is his Case 6. It is a girl who up to about twelve years of age lived in the degrading environment so characteristic of the Jukes. The conditions were about as bad as they could be. Her sisters were prostitutes and she herself was at one time confined in the county jail for vagrancy. Now, however, while still at the beginning of adolescence, her environment changed. She married a German, who was a steady, industrious worker. Dugdale himself says that this case will be watched with great interest, "to see if in spite of the environment of a reputable home," the daughter of a disreputable woman, living until twelve years of age in as bad conditions as the most infamous Jukes, "will revert to the ancestral characteristics, and change what now seems to be an argument in favor of the potency of environment into an argument proving the prepotency of heredity."

The outcome of the environment was not as good as Dugdale evidently expected. The husband of the girl was accidentally killed while intoxicated. She married again but this union was not a success. On the whole, however, the evidence shows that the subsequent career of this Case 6 of Dugdale indicates either that the improved environment changed this woman and her children from the antisocial Juke class into men and women whose behavior conformed fairly well to the conventional code, or that it was one of the expected variations in heredity. The author of *The Jukes in 1915* sums up this case by saying: "An analysis of Althea indicates that she was of an erotic make-up, but that a normal sexual life, with a man of similar eroticism and with frequent experiences of motherhood, led her to respond normally to the *mores*." This seems to the present writer to be a convenient evasion of the problem. If it is not, it is a frank admission of the effect of environment.

Estabrook, the author of *The Jukes in 1915*, says, in commenting upon the statistics relating to certain of their families: "We have difficulty in ascribing the differences of the sibs to environment, since the eldest sister has done well at home; those that left their native environment and were successful were probably already different from those who remained behind." In another comment on one line of the family, Estabrook adds: "It is difficult to explain the origin of this good branch on the ground of environment only. We should expect some anti-social children; it is probably only a fortunate chance that all three [of the children] received only the determiners of industry and intelligence." The unscientific bias toward heredity in these two statements is so clear that no comment is needed.

An investigation of the heredity of Jonathan Edwards has also attracted much attention. Now it so happens that the woman with whom this particular investigation begins is Elizabeth Tuttle, of whose "great beauty," "commanding appearance," "strong will" and "extreme intellectual vigor," there seems to be general agreement. When we turn to her moral character the agreement is also quite general but the facts are not so favorable for heredity.

Jonathan Edwards' father was Timothy Edwards, the son of Richard Edwards, and of the Elizabeth Tuttle of whose moral character we are speaking. Jonathan's grandfather, Richard Edwards, was divorced from his wife, Elizabeth (Tuttle), because of "adultery and other immoralities. The evil trait was in the blood, for one of her sisters murdered her own son and a brother murdered his own sister."[4] This certainly is not a good beginning for the eugenists who wish to find the sterling qualities of Jonathan Edwards in his ancestry. Further, none of the children of Richard Edwards' second marriage "rose above mediocrity."

If any one quality is inherited we have always thought that weak-mindedness should be placed first. S. P. Davies, however, in an investigation of feeble-mindedness, recently published by the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, makes the following remarkable statement: "It is apparent from the foregoing that we can be certain of only one thing at present with regard to the mode of transmission of hereditary mental defects and that is our uncertainty." The writer is reminded here of an observation by Thorndike:[5] "Many of the false inferences about nature versus nurture are due to the neglect of the obvious facts. . . . One can only learn the facts, interpret them with as little bias as possible, and try to secure more facts."

As a bit of evidence in support of Thorndike's statement, Raymond Pearl, after studying the ancestry of eminent philosophers, poets, and scientists, says that had "a statistical eugenist rigidly controlled the breeding of mankind during the last 2,000 or 3,000 years, about 95 per cent of these distinguished men would never have been born." Their birth would have been forbidden.[6]

Turning to the transmission of acquired characteristics, on the other hand, the frank admission must be made that such transmission has not been established, and zoölogists, generally, are convinced that the evidence at present is against it. Botanists, however, are not so sure of this. Some of them even maintain that among plants they have found ample proof of the transmission of acquired characteristics which the zoölogists refuse to accept.

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[4] C. B. Davenport, *Heredity in Relation to Eugenics* (Holt), p. 226.

[5] Edward L. Thorndike, *Educational Psychology, Briefer Course* (Columbia University Press), p. 397.

[6] Raymond Pearl, *The Present Status of Eugenics* (The Sociological Press, Minneapolis).

At the present time, however, we must assume, in the opinion of the writer, that acquired characteristics are not transmitted. Evidence that is not accepted by large numbers of scientific men must always be held under suspicion.

One factor, however, should not be overlooked and that is the amazing plasticity of the human organism. In referring to this plasticity, we must not be understood as meaning that geniuses can be made out of those who have not inherited more than average ability. What we do mean is that with those of fair ability, what will be accomplished in the way of achievement as well as degeneration to crime and viciousness, will depend, to a very large extent, upon the environment.

If we cannot go as far as Lester F. Ward in practically cutting out heredity, we can at least agree with him in the emphasis which he places upon the importance of the environmental conditions. Even Galton, perhaps the most insistent advocate of heredity in the production of geniuses, said: "It is needless to insist that neither [nature nor nurture] is self-sufficient. The highest natural endowment may be starved by defective nurture."[7] In his study of "American Men of Letters,"[8] E. L. Clarke also found, as partial corroboration of the influence of environment, "that frequently persons obviously endowed with ability are unable to acquire the education necessary for success as an author." Clarke also expressed the opinion, as the result of his study, "that without a favorable environment much natural ability remained latent, as was indicated by the sudden increase in the number of literary women when environmental conditions became favorable, an increase which could not possibly be attributed to any sudden changes in the innate mental equipment of women."

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[7] Francis Galton, *English Men of Science* (Dent, London), p. 12.

[8] E. L. Clarke, Columbia University Studies in History, Economics and Public Law, Vol. 72, p. 99.

The family reputation in the community, as we have discovered in the case of the Jukes, has a tremendously potent influence upon the boys and girls. It is not merely that children are inclined to live up to the reputation of their immediate and remote ancestors, but there is the further fact that families of reputation save boys and girls from the penalties of their misdemeanors at the time when saving them may change them.

The social heritage, also, is a matter of immense importance. The children of families with a long history of good reputation and behavior, living in the environment which these families would select, are probably less likely to fall by the wayside than boys and girls who do not have this social background.

In the physical organism we know that its plasticity yields positive results under suitable environmental conditions. Men with a definite background of tuberculosis have become well and strong, and have not only lived to a ripe old age but have accomplished an immense amount of work by living, during childhood and youth, in an environment that would build them up physically.

We certainly have, as yet, no convincing evidence that the same advantageous result may not be produced by the mental and social life of boys and girls. A bit of evidence for this is the fact already noted that men of eminence tend to appear at certain times and in certain places. This has been indicated, as we have seen, by the investigations of Cattell, and Havelock Ellis.

Why, for instance, have not Spain, Switzerland, Holland, Sweden, and Russia produced their proportion of eminent men? The eugenists, of course, have their reply but it is only a dogmatic assertion based on a firm conviction of heredity. It lacks proof. To the writer, the environment seems to be the factor which causes both latent ability and social possibilities to realize themselves in achievements and in behavior.

This assumes at least average intelligence which is probably a matter of heredity. But what a boy or girl can do and what they will do are quite different questions. "Intelligence" which accomplishes nothing may well be held under suspicion. Many contributing causes which cannot be even isolated and much less measured, play a leading rôle in the drama of life.

After children are born, we might as well forget about heredity so far as they are concerned. For the environment in its widest sense is then the only fulcrum upon which we can rest our lever in our efforts to raise children either mentally or morally.

One fact is commonly overlooked in the discussion of the environment of the home, and that is that there are always two factors in this environment; the external conditions and the individual child. The same treatment will affect two children—even brothers—differently. The problem is the same as we repeatedly emphasize—the study of the individual child and the application of the treatment, training, and education to its needs. So once more, we find ourselves at our starting point—the study of child psychology and its application to individual personalities.

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CHAPTER XX

BACKWARD AND PECULIAR CHILDREN

WITH feeble-minded children we are not concerned. Any one who is incapable of caring for himself should be placed in a school planned for these unfortunates, to receive the attention and training which society owes him.

Feeble-mindedness, however, is not as clear and distinct a condition as it is sometimes thought to be. No sharp line can be drawn between those who are feeble-minded and those who are not. Various writers have called attention to this and it has recently been emphasized by Goddard.[1]

As regards feeble-mindedness, he says, "we are in the unpleasant predicament of having a definition that does not define." But Terman, with the complete assurance of the testers, does not hesitate to give us a definition. "For this purpose there is nothing as significant as the I. Q. All who test below 70 I.Q. by the Stanford revision of the Binet-Simon scale should be considered feeble-minded, and it is an open question whether it would not be justifiable to consider 75 I.Q. as the lower limit of 'normal' intelligence. Certainly a large proportion falling between 70 and 75 can hardly be classed as other than feeble-minded, even according to social criterion." [2]

If we take this second level, from 70 to 75, nearly half of the inhabitants of the United States would be feeble-minded, which would give a touch of humor, or tragedy, to Terman's statement according to the literalness with which one takes the classifications of the tests.[3]

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[1] Henry H. Goddard, *Proceedings,* Fifty-second Annual Session of the America Association for the Study of Feeble-mindedness.

[2] Lewis M. Terman, *The Measurement of Intelligence* (Houghton Mifflin), p. 81.

Goddard assumes two men with a mental age of ten years. One of these is clearly feeble-minded and the other manages his affairs in such a way as to prove that he is not feeble-minded. What makes the difference?

According to Goddard, it is "a problem of education and training," but he is careful to assure us that, in the case of the second one, education will not "raise his intelligence level." The training, however, "can develop in him the capacity to do certain routine things which will give him happiness *and enable him to compete in the struggle for existence."*[4] One cannot help wondering what intelligence does if, among other things, it does not help a boy to compete in the struggle for existence.

Having called attention to the fact that "morons," as described by the traditional definition, are being cured "after they have been all but ruined in the public schools," Goddard says: "Frankly, when I see what has been made out of the moron by a system of education, which as a rule is only *half right,* I have no difficulty in concluding that when we get an education that is entirely right there will be no morons who cannot manage themselves and their affairs and compete in the struggle for existence."

Perhaps we have said enough to show that the nature and degree of backwardness in a child is a mighty complex problem. Many conditions that may be contributive, if not causal factors, should be considered. Space permits us to mention only a few. Among these are overindulgence or excessive severity in the home, of which we have spoken in other chapters, incompetent instruction in the school, and a curriculum for which the child is wholly unsuited. Many pages would be needed to name them all.

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[3] Terman's estimate, from the army tests, of the proportion of feeble-minded in the United States is much lower than that given above. Interpretations vary, but even with Terman's figures the position of the present writer seems justified.

[4] Goddard, *op. cit.* The italics are the present writer's.

Two or three cases from families of good social and community standing will show that backward and peculiar children are made problems in various and, at times, obscure ways.[5]

A boy somewhat over nine years of age was referred to the clinic for disobedience, stubbornness, and school failure. He evaded every task set. His intelligence quotient, by the Stanford revision of the Binet tests, was 76. Under prescribed treatment he changed from an antagonistic, aggressively resisting attitude to coöperation in his own improvement. Four years later his intelligence quotient had risen to 96 and he is now doing well, vocationally and socially. He has completely recovered from his antisocial attitude of evading the demands put upon him. One of the prominent causes of his social and educational maladjustment was overindulgence in his home.

Two girls, one ten and a half and the other about a year older, were also called to the writer's attention by Dr. Meltzer. Both were behavior problems and each used all of the devices of children to escape from home and school requirements. Improvement of home conditions and psychological treatment in the clinic produced recovery from nervous hostility, and increased the intelligence quotient of the first from 75 to 93 and of the second from 89 to 98. At the last report—about three years after their first appearance at the clinic—both girls were accepting responsibilities and behaving in a normal, social way.

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[5] These reports were given to the writer by Dr. H. Meltzer, psychologist in the Psychiatric Clinic at St. Louis.

These children were evidently made abnormal by conditions in the home. Their unhygienic mental state was first of all emotional. Then the functional malady spread until their personality and intellectual responses were completely altered for the worse.

Sometimes the resistance to a situation is predominantly physiological. In such cases the body as well as the mind revolts. An illustration will show one curious physiological rebellion.

A girl of ten was frequently nauseated without apparent explanation. Physicians could find no cause. Finally it was noticed that she never vomited on Friday or Saturday night. Then the parents were questioned and the following explanation of the girl's nausea was discovered.

The mother was lonesome at home and, therefore, met her husband at a hotel for dinner after business hours. Of course she took her little daughter with her, and the evening's pleasure ended toward ten o'clock at a moving picture theater.

The child was losing ground in school because she was not getting the right kind of food and the needed sleep. Both the mind and stomach finally revolted. What is the proof, do you ask, that this was not an ordinary case of indigestion and nothing more? Notice the sequence of events: hotel food unsuited to a young girl, and late hours. Physiologically she was prepared for the mental factors which were primarily responsible for her condition. The thought of school operated unconsciously, upsetting her digestion. Observe that she was never nauseated Friday and Saturday nights, *and there was no school the following day*. That is not the way in which indigestion acts.

Further, the girl was taken to the psychiatric clinic because her former joy in her school had changed rather suddenly to aversion. She was also falling behind her classmates, though before she had done the work easily. The girl could give no satisfactory explanation. She liked her teacher and classmates, but she hated school and study.

Her parents wanted to know whether her retardation was caused by lack of intelligence. It was, but the defect was not in the child.

She rebelled against the conditions without knowing why. Then her stomach came to her assistance and acted so perversely that she could not go to school; but, like all good stomachs, having saved her from the thing she dreaded, it behaved quite properly before the holidays.

Incompetent instruction, again, includes training in the home and in the school which does not take account of the natural impulses of children or of the peculiarities of individual boys and girls. The natural impulses we have discussed in other chapters, but here we wish to say that all children are not built on the same pattern.

Few youngsters are equally capable in all of the subjects of the curriculum. Sometimes they are intensely interested in things outside of the school requirements, but their interests are not discovered.

Some years ago, the writer studied the school days and records of more than fifty men and women who later achieved distinction. Among these were Darwin, Linnæus, Harriet Martineau, Robert Fulton, Newton, Richard Sheridan, Joseph Banks, John Hunter, Lyell, Byron, Sir Walter Scott, William H. Seward, Oliver Goldsmith, David Hume, and Sir Humphry Davy.[6] Now the interesting fact about these outstanding men and women is that they were regarded by their teachers as stupid.

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[6] Those interested will find details in the present writer's *Mind in the Making* (Scribner).

We have no wish to argue the question whether these boys and girls would have ranked high in the present-day mental tests. The point which we wish to make is that during their childhood, some of these eminent men and women were interested in things which did not count in school grades. Others, again, developed slowly. Whether these latter would have brought high grades with the present tests of intelligence is unproved, and perhaps one guess is as good as another.

Parents, of course, are interested in discovering the abilities as well as the disabilities of their children, and they are shirking their duty when they put the entire responsibility upon the school. Teachers, naturally, are concerned with the progress of their pupils in the subjects of the curriculum. If a child does not fit into the school program, there is something the matter with him. But the question is, what is it?

It is easy to say that teachers should know all about the interests and individual abilities of their pupils, and a large number of them do try earnestly to get this information. It is, however, too large a demand to insist that they have all of the "inside" information about their fifty children.

So far as intelligence alone is concerned, their judgment is likely to be warped by the emphasis which they put upon the interest and success in the school work. If the reply to this is, use intelligence tests, the answer is that lack of time forbids giving them to individuals and, further, teachers lack the psychological knowledge needed for adequate interpretation of the answers.

Group tests are valuable only when the individual does not count. For reasonably accurate results with groups it would be necessary to use so many tests that the time required both in giving and in comparing would be prohibitive.

Assuming, however, that a sufficient variety of tests is given to have the errors of one revealed by others, the fact remains that in diagnosing children we are not concerned with intelligence alone. We are dealing with personalities.

Personality is more than intelligence. It includes, among other factors, emotional peculiarities, impulsions, obsessions, complexes, fears, belief in one's inadequacy, and the compensation resorted to that real or imagined incompetence may be concealed. Then, too, there are all of the volitional defects, the nature and remedial treatment of which we are only beginning to learn. Tests of intelligence, and especially group tests, at their best, will never give us the psychoclinical picture that we should have to diagnose a backward or peculiar child.

For some years it has been known that the body and the mind are not separate and distinct. All organs and all functions, whether physical or mental, are intimately connected and interrelated. A defect in one place is not without some influence elsewhere, and the final output in achievement will be in some way the resultant of all the physical and mental factors of the organism.

Wallin and Ebersole tested the effect on twenty-seven children of a year's training in hygienic eating, together with such dental treatment as was needed, and found rather startling results. "Most of the members of this experimental squad were laggards and repeaters, pedagogically retarded from one to four years in their school work, but during the experimental year only one pupil failed of promotion, while six did thirty-eight weeks of work in twenty-four weeks; and one boy finished two years of work within the experimental year. In the psychological tests the post-treatment scores were fifty per cent higher than the pre-treatment scores."[7]

The writer has personal knowledge of a girl who was just deaf enough occasionally to miss words in the questions asked or in the answers given. She did not want to admit her defect for fear of being laughed at, and in personal conversation when near the speaker, she had no difficulty. But she was falling behind in scholarship and her teacher told her that she must repeat the year. On the advice of her mother, she told the teacher about her difficulty in hearing and was seated in a more favorable place. She then made her grade without trouble.

In another case, also a girl, the apparent dullness was caused by inability to see what was written on the blackboard. Rather curiously, as the girl told the writer later when a member of his class, she herself did not at first know that she was near-sighted. She thought that others were like herself in respect to what they saw and did not see. Finally, however, a discerning teacher began to suspect the cause of her inability to do the work, and glasses quickly enabled her to recover lost ground. She is now a writer of distinction.

At times the result of obscure defects is more serious. The writer knows of two cases that showed all of the superficial symptoms of epileptic seizures, and in both instances a cure was produced by relieving the eyestrain.

Another case, with a different cause, was a boy described by his mother. The child was dull in school and ceased to grow physically. His parents feared that he was doomed to be one of the unfortunate mental defectives; but, after his inflamed and swollen adenoids were removed, he became bright instead of dull, and during the following year he added six inches to his height.[8] Later he played on the football team of the normal school which he attended and was one of the outstanding leaders both in scholarship and in the general school activities.

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[7] J. E. W. Wallin, *Education of Handicapped Children* (Houghton Mifflin), pp. 84-85.

Many organic or functional defects may work disastrous mental results unless they are discovered and remedied, if a cure is possible. A remarkably suggestive case has come to the writer's notice.

A mother took her young daughter to Hunt's Point Child Guidance Clinic for examination by Dr. W. B. Wolfe. The mother was greatly worried because the child, though nine years old, was in the third grade at school and evidently belonged in the first grade, because she could read only a few short, monosyllabic words.

When asked to read, the child looked dazed and stupid. Her lips and the muscles of her throat moved as if she were about to speak the words and then she looked puzzled and gave it up. If urged she might utter unintelligible sounds which had no apparent connection with what she was trying to read.

Psychiatrists and psychologists have known for some time that left-handedness and speech defects sometimes go together, especially, and this is important, when a vigorous and partially successful effort has been made to get the young child to use its right hand. Only lately, however, have they observed that occasionally such children have difficulty in learning to read.

This girl, Dr. Wolfe noticed, wrote with her right hand and was also right-handed at the table. Investigation then proved that the mother and sister, as well as the child herself, were naturally left-handed but had been taught to use their right hand. They were what has been called "converted sinistrals."

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[8] See Chap. iv of the writer's *Mind in the Making* (Scribner).

Acting on this knowledge, Dr. Wolfe proceeded, first of all, to stop the scolding and nagging to which the child had been subjected at home and school, and then to teach her to read. He began by telling her that left-handed children who have been trained to use their right hand sometimes read from right to left instead of from left to right. He explained that this was what she was trying to do and that this was the reason why she had never been able to learn to read. As a matter of fact, converted sinistrals sometimes also transpose the letters of a word in their effort to read from right to left. Dr. Wolfe, however, only told the girl to follow the words as they were written from left to right and that if she did that she would learn to read.

The training, of course, was long and tedious because all of the acquired habits of reading had to be changed. By degrees, however, the desired result was accomplished and the girl is now doing better work than the others in her class at school. But, in addition to this, her personality was completely reversed. She changed from a frightened, isolated, gloomy child to a joyous, vivacious, aggressive youngster, adequate to the responsibilities of her home and school.

This case, Dr. Wolfe has said, taught him two lessons: first, not to label a child backward too quickly lest, by failing to take account of psychological matters, we condemn him to a tragic existence, and, secondly, that many converted sinistrals are called stupid and leave school to lead a sterile, menial existence because the cause of their "stupidity" was not discovered.

In a personal letter describing this case, Dr. Wolfe, who is now psychiatrist at the Children's Court in New York City, says that he has seen "many cases of juvenile delinquency in which the delinquency could be definitely traced to reading disability due to converted left-handedness. In these cases the boys were considered stupid, and the teachers gave up any attempt to make them read. Consequently, they were left behind in their school and often were found in classes with much younger children. This cut off the opportunity for normal development and practically forced them to seek significance in criminal pursuits."

We have been speaking of children who showed the symptoms of mental deficiency without being really defective. But there are those, of course, who are actually handicapped mentally, and on these unfortunates much work has been done in recent years.

The old notion that the mind and body are separate and that each pursues its isolated course has passed. The maxim of the ancients, *mens sana in corpore sano* has gained new significance and importance with the more recently acquired knowledge about the relation between bodily and mental processes. The body and mind react upon one another. If one functions in a disorderly way, the other is affected. The mind can produce the symptoms of disease, and organs which are out of gear may cause anomalies of the mind.

We are not trying to argue that there are no mentally handicapped children. Unfortunately they exist. In such cases, of course, the first thing to do is to ascertain the kind and degree of deficiency. This requires the knowledge and skill of those in charge of psychiatric clinics.

A large amount of work has been done in testing handicapped children for sense discrimination, disorders of sensibility, attention and memory defects as well as for disturbances of memory and associated processes. Language, speech defects, and peculiarities or inadequacies in reasoning, have also been carefully investigated, and those who wish to learn about these details will find them in some of the books at the end of this chapter.

Special schools with variable curricula have been established in all of the cities and in many of the large towns. The purpose of these schools is to fit the work to the defects of the handicapped children. It is a rather interesting fact that these unfortunate youngsters are receiving more personal attention than superior ones.

What the writer wishes to emphasize is that children should be subjects of personal study, and the educational environment of every child should be planned with reference to the needs of the individual. As a matter of fact, children are usually turned loose in whatever educational pasturage the parents can afford and then they are allowed to shift for themselves. If, in time, it is found that they are dropping behind children of their own age various devices are used to spur them on. The method used commonly bears a close relation to the thickness of the pocketbook of the father. It may be nagging, punishment, or a summer tutor, but intelligence rarely interferes because that would require the study of the psychology of childhood or youth and its application to the case in hand.

If the explanation of backwardness in children were always the same, the matter would be very simple. It is the difference in the causes that has produced the problem which is discussed in the books listed below. When we get away from the strictly feeble-minded and the low-grade moron, each case is an individual study. At times it is not so much a matter of ability as of abilities, or, again, of one absorbing ability. A boy, for instance, may be interested in so many things that he cannot get interested in one; and, again, he may be occupied with some extra-curriculum interest that means more to him than all of the studies of the school. What we would have parents and teachers do is to distinguish between those who are actually defective and those who only have the symptoms; and, in addition, we urge the thoughtful, informed training that will prevent retardation except in those unfortunate cases in which poor quality of cerebral tissue is the cause.

Unhappily, neglect of children is not confined to families of congested communities. Many wealthy parents are too much interested in their business and social advancement to give the time and study necessary to discover why their boys and girls are failing in their work and giving up the attempt to get even a high school education.

Mental development is the result of the reaction of an individual to the surrounding conditions, but reaction requires something to react against, some resistance, something that calls out whatever ability a child may have. If the environment is not stimulating, there is no reaction and, consequently, little or no development. Naturally, the educational environment of a really backward child should be different from that of one who is of average, or superior, ability.

"Peculiar" children are about as numerous as parents, for they are made in the home, and frequently teachers do their bit in helping along the peculiarity. Some of the causes have been briefly discussed in other chapters. Fear, nervousness, the inferiority feeling, evading reality or compromising with it by means of compensations do not end with themselves. They carry in their train a large retinue of consequences. The consoling daydreams leading to forgetfulness of obligations and failures, regression to infantilism, the fruition of which we see in many men and women, rationalizing so as to keep one's self-respect, blaming failure on rationalized causes, and, finally, obstinacy, are a few of the peculiar products manufactured in the home.

We said at the beginning of this chapter that we should not treat of feeble-mindedness. Backwardness and inefficiency which result from remediable physical causes or are made by parents and teachers have been our theme. Further, it is the firm conviction of the writer that if these "cases" can be eliminated the number of backward and "peculiar" children would be so greatly reduced that the result would seem miraculous. Prevention, not salvaging, should be the slogan of the home and school. It is an educational adventure well worth trying.

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CHAPTER XXI

LANGUAGE

THE size of the vocabulary of children at different ages, how words get meaning, and several other questions are of great importance in the training and development of children during their early years. Let us begin with the vocabularies of boys and girls who are learning to use the language.

A good many studies have been made by the observational method of the extent of the vocabulary of children. The comparison of the results of these investigations is liable to error because some of the writers count different forms of the same word separately. Some of these observers, again, count proper nouns, while others omit them. A few list verb forms only once, and others include the infinitive and participial forms as parts of the aggregate vocabulary. Invented words, again, are used by some and are excluded by others.

Accepting the results of these investigations as they are intended to be taken, namely, as indicating the extent of the vocabulary of a child, we find that some children, at least, use more words than would be expected by one who has not examined the statistics. Bolton in his contribution to the *Children's Foundation* tabulated the vocabulary of a boy of three and found that the number of words used spontaneously was over 1,200. This number, Bolton evidently considers large, but some investigators have found children of three using over 1,400 words. According to

Preyer, nine children, two years of age, eight of whom were girls, had vocabularies which they were using that ranged from 173 to something over 1,100.

It is quite clear from these observations of Preyer, that the number of words used during the first two or three years of childhood varies. The largest vocabulary, reported for a child of three, was over 2,000 words and the smallest in the same investigation was a little less than 700.

According to an investigation of the Russell Sage Foundation, the average child of from four to five years of age uses 1,700 words. Margaret M. Nice, again, as quoted by the lexicographer, F. H. Vizetelly, found seven English-speaking children, five years of age, using vocabularies ranging from 1,528 to 5,948 words.

Some interesting and significant facts have been brought out in the study of these vocabularies. Perhaps the first thing to mention in this connection is that the vocabulary which is understood by the child is always larger than the vocabulary that he uses. This has an important bearing upon the vagueness of content of words. Vagueness, and oftentimes erroneous meaning of words, which will be referred to shortly, is closely connected with the observation that children understand more words than they can use. Indefiniteness of meaning does not always prevent a child from understanding what he is told.

A question which used to be discussed rather vigorously was, what parts of speech do children use first? This question really has no meaning because, as other writers have pointed out, children use what have been called sentence words.

To give a concrete illustration: If the child says, "up," the meaning is perfectly clear. It is, "lift me up." Other words are used which would not be understood except in the particular situation in which they are employed. Some infants who wish to be taken up, say, "me," and add to the interpretation of the word by holding out their arms.

At the beginning of the use of language, interjectional speech is one of the noticeable characteristics. Some investigators say that nouns are acquired early and in relatively large numbers; that the verbal element takes the next place, followed by adverbs and adjectives. The various pronouns, actually used in the proper way as pronouns, are learned later and with difficulty.

Mrs. Moore, for example,[1] found, in the case of the child whom she studied, that out of six hundred and sixty-one words used within a certain period somewhat over 40 per cent were nouns or pronouns; about 25 per cent were verbs; a little less than 10 per cent were adverbs and 7 per cent or more were adjectives. In the early part of the second year of childhood, 33 per cent of the sentences had no verb, but at the end of that year this number was reduced to about 7 per cent.

Boyd[2] estimated the percentage of each part of speech used by his child at two, three, and four years of age and found a sharp decline from the second to the third year in the percentage of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, and a rise in the percentage of pronouns.

The meaning which children give to words is perhaps one of the most important factors in the training of children. To put it very bluntly, the meaning is likely to be vague and indefinite when it isn't wrong. This vagueness in meaning extends to much later years than is ordinarily thought. Earl Barnes,[3] for example, found that the word,

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[1] Kathleen C. Moore, *The Mental Development of a Child.*

[2] William Boyd, *Pedagogical Seminary,* Vol. 21, p. 95.

[3] Earl Barnes, *Studies in Education,* Second Series (Philadelphia), p. 56.

"emperor" had no clear meaning in the minds of at least two-thirds of the eight-year-old children whom he studied.

Among the definitions were, "One who makes laws for the state," "a good man," "a school master," "a soldier," and "a man who makes rules." A girl as old as ten defined the word as "a nephew belonging to the Queen."

We see illustrated in these definitions something which has been observed repeatedly in young children, namely, the tendency to define words in so specific a way as to hide the real meaning of the word. This specific type of definition which frequently takes the form of use or utility has been noted by Chambers.[4]

"School" is something with which every child, who has passed the age of six, is familiar. Yet Chambers found a girl, American born, defining a school as "a house where children go to read and write." A boy, aged ten, of foreign parentage, gave the following definition: "A school is a number of pupils gathered together for the purpose of receiving instruction given by a teacher."

As a result of his investigation, Barnes found that the definitions of "peasant," "monk," and "nation" have much the same characteristics as those which we have found given for "emperor" and "school." The quantity and accuracy of the content of the idea at successive ages, and other peculiarities, seem to be much the same. Some defined "monk" as an old man. To one or two it meant "cruel" and to others, "people that used to live in Spain."

The results found by Barnes were verified in all the essential respects by Chambers.[5] As characteristic definitions given to Chambers, we may cite "monk is a monkey," and again, "monk is a chipmunk." The ages from eight to eleven, according to Chambers, seem to be "a time when the child would rather guess than confess ignorance. The definitions of the other words used in this study sustained this conclusion, showing the greatest number of wrong answers from nine to eleven."

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[4] Will G. Chambers, *Pedagogical Seminary*, Vol. 11, p. 30.

[5] *Ibid.*

Both Barnes and Chambers found that similarity is responsible for many errors in the notions which children get of various words. Quite a number of American children whom Barnes investigated, said "that monk was a little squirrel." "This was confusing until one girl said, 'a monk is a chipmunk.' . . . Both in England and America," Barnes says, "many children confuse 'monk and monkey.' "

In support of Barnes' belief that euphonic analogy is responsible for many of the errors in definitions, Chambers found[6] that 27 per cent of the wrong definitions of the word "peasant" was caused by confusing it with "pleasant"; 9 per cent by confusion with "pheasant," and 7 per cent with "present."

How to give children correct ideas of words is clearly of the utmost importance. It goes without saying that clear thinking is impossible without a correct notion about the meaning of the words used. Moreover, training in accurate understanding of words, if not the beginning of wisdom is, at any rate, a preparation for it. The writer does not know of any better method of training young children in discrimination and in accurate thinking than to get them into the habit of examining words to see whether they have a clear meaning. The following true story will illustrate the way in which boys and girls accept meaningless words and assume that they understand them.

A friend of the writer, a grammar school principal, after vain efforts to convince his teachers that the children understood little of what they were taught and that they were getting vague words instead of ideas, tried the following experiment in all the grades from the second to the seventh inclusive.

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[6] *Ibid.*, p. 47.

After making a short speech to the children in order to get them into the right attitude, he concluded his talk in the following way: "Now children, I want to ask a favor of you and I hope that you will grant it. How many of you will promise to sagittate your constitution before to-morrow morning? Please raise your hand." Every hand went up. In one of the rooms, the principal thought that he was caught, when a boy raised his hand to ask a question. "What is it?" asked the principal. "I did it, please, yesterday," was the reply.

Perhaps we have given sufficient proof of the vagueness of the meaning of words in the minds of children even of the sixth and seventh grades. We have also raised the question, how the meaning of words is to be taught. The old method, still followed to an unfortunately large extent, is to send the children to the dictionary. Now any adult knows quite well how confusing the dictionary can be even for one who is mature.

An adult, not infrequently, must spend some little time examining the many definitions and synonyms given for a word with which he is not familiar, before he can get the fundamental meaning for which he is seeking. "With children," as Barnes says, "the dictionary can simply reshuffle the existing ideas. Not only does it give no new content but it obscures the meaning already taking form in the mind. Thus, if the child knows 'president' and 'king' and then learns from his dictionary that an 'emperor is the ruler of a state' his previous notions of 'president' and 'king' are rendered less clear than they were before."

Every child, of course, should learn to use a dictionary, but its use can only be acquired with the personal help of the teacher. Now let us see if we can give a positive answer to the question, how to teach children the meaning of words. In the opinion of the writer, the most fertile method is the use of the word by the children and teacher. The child will then infer the meaning from the context, but it must not be assumed that the child's inference is correct. Its accuracy must be constantly checked up.

This, of course, is the way in which adults verify, if they do not get, the accurate meaning of words. We are reading a passage and come to a new word. Naturally we do not immediately refer to the dictionary. We try to see what it apparently means in the context in which it is used. Then we turn to the dictionary and run through the list of varying and confusing definitions until we find the one that fits the context. In this way we get what may be called the generalized meaning of the word. In the case of children, of course, leaving them to the mercy of the context is hopelessly confusing, but in all good schools explanations of new terms accompany and are based on the context before the children at the moment. It would be well if parents understood more clearly the difficulties that children experience in getting the meaning of words and the importance of it as one of the foundation stones of accurate thinking.

Stuttering could be discussed under several of the chapter heads of this book. It might be treated under "fear," or under "nervousness." After all, however, it seems to the writer that no place is more suitable for its brief treatment than the present chapter.

Stammering has so many causes that we can only indicate in a general way some of those which perhaps are among the more common. It is impossible, of course, to give the proportion of cases in which the cause is psychological rather than physiological, but it is certainly beyond question that the cases of stammering which have no physiological basis are numerous. The evidence for this statement is found in the cures which are produced by psychological methods.

Dr. Tom Williams gives the case of a ten-year-old boy who stammered because of what was called "general nervousness." A brother who stammered at about the same age had recovered without special treatment but the hopes of the parents that their second son would also recover were disappointed. He rarely stammered in his games, and a sentence once started was never interrupted.

The personal examination which Dr. Williams made showed that the cause of his stammering was *fear lest he should stammer*. This has been found to be the common explanation. A child who begins to stammer without adequate cause is likely to be reprimanded by his parents until the cautions assume the gravity of nagging. Thus it was with the boy of whom we have been speaking. He was so anxious not to stammer that he did the thing which he was trying not to do. In addition to the psychological treatment he was given practice in breathing exercises. Probably his insufficient inspiration was caused in part by the dread of stammering. Under treatment he recovered within a reasonable time.

An illustration of a psychological cure has just come to the writer's attention. The boy, who was one of his students, stammered so badly that it was practically impossible to let him try to talk in the class. Too much time was wasted and, in addition, his efforts were painful to the other members of the class. The boy was a good student and graduated somewhat higher than the average. A year after his graduation the writer met him and discovered to his surprise that he was no longer stammering.

"How did you succeed in overcoming it?" the young man was asked. "I just applied the principles that I had learned in psychology," was the reply. "When I was in college there was no dominating incentive not to stammer. Of course I wanted to recover but I guess I did not exert myself very much. When I left college, however, I took a position with a real estate firm. Of course I couldn't sell real estate if I stammered. That was one strong incentive. Then I fell in love with a girl and I mustn't stammer when I talked to her personally or over the telephone. This was another incentive. So I just stopped."

Call it suggestion, mental treatment, or anything you please. All mental cures, after all, have the same basis. They all go back to suggestion, and in this case the motive behind the suggestion was so strong that it produced the desired result.

Domineering parents and a feeling of inferiority because of a more attractive or brighter brother or sister often create an emotional instability which may produce stammering. A fixed feeling of inferiority undoubtedly disturbs the ability of children to express themselves readily.

Obviously, calling the attention of a child to his stammering or speaking of it to others in the presence of the boy or girl is about the worst thing that a parent or teacher can do. Such references to his speech defect make the child self-conscious, create the expectation that he will stammer, and prevent the mental and muscular relaxation which are needed to avoid stammering.

It is well known that no one always stammers and some do so only rarely. Fear lest one may not be adequate to a situation is a common cause, but fear of the situation is soon transformed into fear of stammering. Usually, at the end, the two causes combine; the fear of stammering increases the uncertainty about the situation and this anxiety reacts upon the mind, aggravating the fear of stammering. The treatment, evidently, is to change the attitude of the child toward social situations. Everything that we have said about the feeling of inferiority and emotional stability applies here. Stammerers usually lack emotional poise because the environment overwhelms them. Their wish to be adequate, and dread, amounting to conviction, that they will not, produce a paralysis of mental functions. Inhibitions dominate.

Speech, every one will agree, is a response to a social situation and is exceedingly sensitive to the relations that prevail between the speaker and the auditor. It is really a form of social adjustment. While this has been known for a long time, it has not, in the opinion of the writer, received the recognition that it warrants.

The cures indicate that, quite commonly, stuttering is not a defect of speech. It is often the result of a supersensitiveness in social relations that has become pathological.

We must not forget that our adjustments are made to personalities rather than to things, and these adjustments, to a large extent, are colored and affected by our emotions. Personality conflicts are likely to arise and sometimes these conflicts may easily lead to partial mental disintegration. Inhibitions for one reason or another may arise and become conditioned. Further, socially conditioned inhibitions easily produce conflicts of which we may or may not be aware.

In applying this to children it is important to bear in mind that the more serious conflicts which a child meets during the course of its development are of a social character. He may be unjustly accused of some act, or the accusation, if true, may be too severe. In either case, inhibitions, if not conflicts, are likely to be established.

The writer has sometimes had the feeling that if adults were required to make all of the social adjustments that a young child must make within the short allotted time, they would go insane. Fortunately for the sanity of the nation, children make these adjustments, to a large extent, unconsciously and at a period when time does not count. Unhappily, however, children are left too largely at the mercy of chance. They are not guided in their social adjustments and, consequently, disaster is likely to follow.

The writer is acquainted with a young man, who came to him for consultation. He stammers badly and an extended conversation, somewhat after the manner of psychoanalysis, revealed his childhood history. In some way which the young man could not clearly define, he had got the notion in the home that his opinion did not count for much. Largely as the result of this, he became diffident and oversensitive in his social relations with his companions. This led to hesitation in speech which developed by degrees into stuttering. Not being sure of himself, he would hesitate, start to say something, feel that perhaps he would be laughed at, and then the stammering would begin. Clearly this is a case of a personality brought into conflict with social requirements. He was not helped in his social adjustments and, therefore, he drifted into a feeling of inequality which led to maladjustment.

It is rare for those who have what we may call a superiority complex to stammer. Their self-assurance may cause them to get excited and to express too rapidly the wisdom which they think they have. This excitement, of course, may lead to occasional stuttering, but so far as the writer's observation goes, these cases are in a class by themselves.

The stammering here is quite clearly the attempt to speak too fast, and the excited outpouring of words may cause a confusion of speech which has the appearance of stammering, but which really has a different explanation from the majority of the cases.

Psychiatrists tell us that many cases of disordered minds are the result of failure in the social adjustment of the personality of the individual. Fortunately, every one does not go to pieces in the attempt to make this adjustment to the environment. In the cases of which we are now thinking, where the mental disorder is functional rather than organic, the trouble begins in childhood.

The writer would not assert that all cases of stammering are caused by some form of social maladjustment, but failure adequately to fit into social situations creates inhibitions which are of the conditioned sort. Further, any experience which has started a conditioned emotional response, if repeated frequently, is strengthened and finally becomes a fixed habit. This is the explanation of many cases of stammering.

If proof of this is needed, the writer would refer to the many stammerers who have been cured by one form or another of mental treatment. In his teaching experience several students have stuttered badly in the classroom but when talking quietly in personal conversation they have shown hardly the slightest tendency to stammer.

Sometimes overemphasizing the importance of the listeners or of the occasion will disturb the easy flow of language. One stammerer said that the consciousness of the presence of auditors produced in him a feeling of responsibility which, causing an emotional turmoil, made him stutter. Such a person feels the necessity of saying something and yet fears that he cannot get the words out. He is overpowered with the belief that he will not succeed in speaking fluently and therefore he stammers.

The curious fact that some orators stammer on ordinary occasions but never when speaking to a public audience has attracted comment. This was true of Canon Kingsley, and it has been frequently referred to as inexplicable. It is, however, not so mysterious as it appears. The orator goes before his audience with the feeling of superiority—the conviction of leadership. His hearers cannot talk back. They must listen, and he will show them a thing or two. Consequently, the peculiar attitude of inferiority that causes stammering does not exist.

The writer knows a teacher who stammers distressingly in his psychological seminar, but before her pupils she expresses herself readily and fluently. Her explanation is that she is "sure of herself" in her school, but doubtful of her knowledge in the presence of graduate students in psychology.

Coriat, as those familiar with his work would guess, thinks that sex complexes are the cause of stammering, but the present writer cannot accept this explanation. If his experience counts for anything—and he has helped a dozen or more to cure themselves—the question is a much larger one than psychoanalysts, with their single explanation, can understand. It is a problem of personality with all that this involves.

Stammerers must rid themselves of their peculiar timidities, and these are not always the same for different persons. Sometimes the environment, and at other times the individual, must be made over. An overbearing, exacting father not infrequently is the cause. Then, when the fearful youngster stammers it is thought to be evidence of guilt, though only dread of an impending fate for a more or less unknown, and perhaps trivial, cause may be the explanation. But quite as often the reason must be sought in the "make-up" of the individual, which we call personality. Over-sensitiveness, timidity in general, fear of having one's opinions ridiculed, all of these factors and many more, play a leading rôle in the depressing human drama of a stammerer. But parents should rid themselves of the belief that the child will "outgrow" the defect. The chances are that he will not.

Perhaps the first thing to do is to get rid of the depression and get a little humor into the life of the emotionally afflicted child. At any rate, generous doses of humor should be given with the other mental treatment. The writer has yet to discover a joyous stammerer. So far as he has known them, gloom colored their life much of the time with a depressive tint of gray. This may be because joy implies confidence and this is what stammerers lack.

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CHAPTER XXII

IMAGINATION

SEVERAL erroneous notions about imagination are rather common. It is supposed to develop naturally of itself. It is thought to be a good or bad growth according to the things with which it deals. If it pictures what is not true, some parents think it is bad and punish the child in proportion to his sins. Probably at least 95 per cent of the parents believe that it is concerned wholly with fiction. All of these beliefs are either untrue or so largely erroneous that they are as bad as if they were wholly false.

Imagination is the basis of thinking. To illustrate with two or three types, it must be generously developed in all scientists else they will not be able to think out possible explanations of their observations. All lawyers must have it to formulate in their own minds the probable arguments which their opponents will lay before the jury. The difference between physicians who have imagination and those who have not is so striking as to hardly require illustrations. As this is being written, the writer has learned of a case in which a physician failed to diagnose a tumor in the brain as the cause of certain rather obscure symptoms. The trouble was that he lacked imagination. He had an abundance of knowledge. Finally, business men who do not have imagination yield to their competitors who are able to picture the future course that business is to take.

The fact is that there is no occupation in which imagination is not essential. Yellow fever, malaria and diabetes, to mention only three scourges which have afflicted the human race, were conquered by men who could use their imagination to picture possible causes and cures of these diseases—causes which never occurred to those of less imaginative power.

Newton's law of gravitation can be called a sudden imaginative outburst after long years of work. He pictured the ties that hold the planets in their orbits and then set himself to the task of proving whether his guess was correct. Pasteur's marvelous discoveries of the action of bacteria were guesses which seemed probable to him from the observations and investigations which he had made.

Modern medicine and modern science, in general, are based on guesses which keen observers made because of the facts which came under their observation. Many of the guesses were wrong but the guesser who was equipped with knowledge and the ability to test his hypotheses soon proved that they would not work. Edison is reported to have said that he made three thousand guesses for one of his inventions, any of which was theoretically possible, but, as it transpired, only one would work. Alfred Russel Wallace was a remarkable guesser and some of his hypotheses, so far as present knowledge goes, were impossible, but one was the theory of natural selection which established a reputation that was already impressive.

To be sure, one may make wild guesses. Scientific advancement is not merely a record of successful hypotheses, for the path of progress is littered with guesses that were absurd. Perpetual motion has always been a favorite guess of the uninformed. For twenty-five years Keely received the confidence and the money of men and women who were willing to invest in a guess which denied fundamental scientific principles; and it was only after his death that his laboratory was found to be equipped with the apparatus demanded by modern science for the production of motion which he claimed to be self-perpetuating.

Evidently then, the imagination which produces successful guesses must be based on knowledge which conforms to the facts of science. Facts are the anchors of stable people.

It is, of course, not easy to draw the line between stability and instability so far as the imagination is concerned. One can adhere so closely to established beliefs as to make no progress. These are the stale people. They never get anywhere because they are afraid of leaving their anchorage.

But the danger at the other extreme is equally great. Intelligent men are continually being swindled in business because they break away from the moorings of sound policy, and charlatans are daily fooling the people with mysterious healing methods which have no scientific basis. Where shall we draw the line? Only geniuses can afford to tear themselves loose from the moorings of what seem to be established facts, and there has never been an overproduction of geniuses.

Most people are too literal. When a prominent man makes a statement which appears superficially to be a complete break with scientific beliefs his utterances are accepted with all their literalness. Consequently, when Rudyard Kipling was recently reported in the daily press to have spoken approvingly before the Royal Society of Medicine about the old astrologers, the stock of astrology went up. Probably he will be quoted during the next decade by adherents of this popular delusion.

When a man of Kipling's reputation says that Culpepper, one of the ancient astrologers, saved a girl's life by flout-ing the most renowned physicians of his day and consulting the heavens, he is only fixing more firmly uninformed, literal people in their superstitions. He is not helping parents to guide the thinking of their children. People have been cured in the past, and are cured to-day, of functional diseases by methods which have only psychological influence. Mr. Kipling probably knows this but many of those who read the newspaper account of his address will fail to get the point.

Wishful thinking is the outgrowth of the imagination of many of those who boast of being free from the shackles of modern science. The line between fancy and creative imagination is very thin. On the other hand, those who are bound too closely to conventional customs and beliefs are obtuse to the many suggestions offered by the world around them. One who is keen catches a point which has been missed by men of greater ability.

The great Viennese physiologist, Brücke, for instance, just missed the discovery of the ophthalmoscope. He saw the reflection of the retina through the pupil of the eye but did not carry his observation far enough to put a lens in front of the pupil. Freud, again, observed that cocaine causes a numbness in that portion of the skin to which it is applied, but a young man of far less ability who read Freud's paper wondered whether this observation did not show that cocaine may be used to anesthetize the eye. Freud has since wondered why he missed that guess.

Far down the animal scale we find evidences both of obtuseness and of that penetration which for want of another name we may call, even in the lower animals, imagination.

W. H. Hudson gives an excellent illustration in *A Nat-*

uralist on La Plata. He saw some children entertaining themselves by putting a mouse in a long hollow giant thistle stalk and placing the stalk temptingly before a cat. All of the cats smelled their prey and they would spring first at one end of the stalk and then at the other as the mouse tried to escape. Naturally, none of them succeeded because the mouse was discreet enough to stay inside the stalk. One cat, however, "saw" the point. He smelt at both ends of the stalk to assure himself that the mouse was still inside, then began deliberately to bite a piece from one end until what was left of the stalk was so short that the mouse was indiscreet enough to attempt an escape. Then the cat had her dinner. "Every stalk," Hudson says, "which was placed before this cat was demolished in a businesslike way," but the other cats, though they looked on while the one with "imagination" was biting its way to a meal, could never learn the trick.

In some detective stories, as the reader probably knows, the detective tries to place himself in the position and state of mind of the criminal. Then, as John Wilson Murray has said in the *Memoirs of a Great Detective,* he lets his imagination play around the crime. He conjures up all the fears that the guilty man must have had and he tries to think what the criminal would have tried to do to escape detection.

Imagination is really allowing the mind to play around facts and experiences, facts which one knows and the experiences which one has had, so far as they relate to the problem in hand. This was what Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace did, and it was in this way that they came upon the theory of natural selection as an explanation of the origin of species. It is also what a boy of ten did after his father had employed a "water finder" to locate a place for a well. "You know, dad," the boy said, "that's all bunk. The man's arms get tired and twitch. I tried it after he left and my twig turned down where he said there was no water."

We have said that most people are too literal. They cannot see beyond the words which an author writes and they cannot reconstruct situations so as to advance in their business or profession. The so-called practical man is of this kind. He is so literal that he cannot think of anything except that which now exists. All changes in business have been opposed by the majority of business men. The Federal Reserve Bank law was vehemently resisted by bankers and economists. We say that captains of large industries have vision but vision is only another word for imagination.

The discoverers of antiseptics, of vaccine for smallpox and diphtheria, had visions in medicine, and Justice Marshall of the Supreme Court had legal visions. The difficulty to-day in meeting what is known as the crime wave is the result of lack of imagination by the great majority of lawyers. They cannot see ahead. To alter the present court procedure and legal methods they think would be dangerous. Yet some of these lawyers know how these legal customs grew, and most of them are well aware that a wholly different method works well in England.

At the present time we are suffering from lack of imagination on the prohibition question. We are merely marking time waiting for conditions to get bad enough to force the imagination, against our will, to picture a better way of making people temperate.

Thus far, we have been speaking of adults, but it must not be forgotten that adults lack imagination because it was never trained in them while they were children. Training youngsters so that their imaginations will aid them in achievements is an immensely interesting and complex problem. During the early period of childhood the imagination should probably be allowed free scope. Fairies have their place in this training. Constructions also of various sorts are not to be omitted at this age, because children like to think out a block house or other structure and then to build it.

As children approach the age when fairies and block houses no longer satisfy the demand for true stories and real events, they should be taught the value of facts as a basis for their thinking. After all, thinking is only using the imagination for a definite purpose. Facts in abundance should be given but always with recognition of the conclusion or the end to which they may be applied.

It has been pretty well established that young children think chiefly in concrete visual terms. Until about ten years of age, the child is predominantly a visualizer. As children grow older, visual and concrete imagery become more subordinate and verbal imagery assumes greater prominence. At twelve or thirteen years of age there is a definite decline in the use of images and the subsequent recovery of this means of thinking is due to the growth of power in the adolescent to think in less concrete ways. Relations between ideas now begin a rapid growth, and thoughts are grouped together by the connections of their meaning. Child training should take into account the decrease of concrete imagery and should be so directed as to preserve this ability so far as possible.

Thinking in clear mental pictures is a definite advantage and probably serves a useful purpose in clarifying thought but, while the effort is being made to preserve visual images, parents and teachers should give constant attention to the logical relations between the ideas which arise spontaneously or from teaching, in the mind of the young adolescent.

It is improbable that children are predestined by inheritance to a particular ideational type. Those who think in visual, auditory, or motor images do so probably because of their early environmental training. All of these methods of thinking serve a valuable purpose. Above all, clearness is to be sought and the demands of concrete imagery are a safeguard, even if an unsatisfactory one, against loose thinking.

We must not forget that the purpose which the imagination finally serves is to aid creative thought. That the imagination may not run wild, children should be trained to demand an intelligent picture—visual or auditory—of statements or theories. One of the chief obstacles to clear thinking is the ease with which men and women accept vague, meaningless words. To a certain extent insistence upon a definite and clear visual or auditory picture will defeat this tendency to loose thinking.

Parents should remember that, assuming average intelligence, the ability of their children to think straight and to the point will be largely determined by the training which they receive in the home. Without an active imagination, worth-while thinking cannot be done. But statements, beliefs, and theories should be constantly checked by this question, "Can I put this in terms that are intelligible and which conform to present-day knowledge?" Ghosts and other ethereal materializations do not meet this requirement. Again, the question, "Do dogs and horses reason?" depends on the definition given to reasoning. In thinking, facts, not fictions, are essential.

The imagination which is so essential to advancement may thus play us tricks. That it may benefit adults, children should be well grounded in the established facts of scientific knowledge. It is useless to say that the science of to-day will be overthrown to-morrow. An adolescent trained to base his imagination on facts which are accepted at present will be ready to alter the raw material of his imagination, when he learns that new facts have been discovered. It is doubtful if any one thing is more important in teaching children to understand the facts and experiences of life than the training of the imagination. This emphasis is demanded because nothing receives less attention in the home and school. Like Topsy, it is just allowed to grow.

One of the dangers in present-day education is that the creative imagination will be suppressed by the pressure of the demand for reproduction of what one has learned. In our efforts to finish schoolbooks and to get "educated," memory work is endangering constructive thought. We must remember that everything which a child thinks he is creating is for him a discovery, and a few imaginative productions, whether of hand or mind, are worth many repetitions of what the child has learned. The difference is not in the objective result but in the effect upon the mind and attitude of the child. From three to about eight, stories, fairy tales and myths constitute much of the material for the creative imagination to work upon. During these years children are strongly animistic, and well-selected fairy tales meet their needs.

Deception during early years has been so common in the past that we are now passing through a period of expiation and overcompensation for the sins of our parents. "Children have been lied to," we are told, "now let's tell them the truth about everything." No fairies, no Santa

Claus. Nothing but the truth. Well, so far as fairies are concerned we disagree.

Putting Santa Claus and fairy stories in the same class with the stork, ghosts, giants, bad men, and a hell for wicked children, as some do,[1] seems to the present writer a perversion of the idea of truthfulness. A principle may be made to include so much as to lose its value. But children should never be told "fairy stories" about birth and other matters connected with sex, because mystery about those subjects arouses an unhealthy curiosity. Such questions should be answered truthfully in language suited to the years of those who ask.[2]

Ghost stories should never be told to children both because they frighten them when asleep, as well as during their waking periods, and also because they tend to make the children believe in apparitions for which there is no convincing evidence. There is a clear distinction between fairy tales during the period when the children crave them and ghost stories. Fairies always do pleasant things. They are not frightful to think about. They help the children, as the youngsters believe, in what they want to do. They are pleasant companions, and in this respect they differ greatly from terrifying ghosts.

There is, of course, always danger of overindulging the fancy, but training in observation and perception will usually restrain it within limits. The imagination needs raw material upon which to work. In early childhood children are less interested in facts than in pictures of fancy. Story-telling characterizes these early years and this desire should be encouraged both because it offers opportunity to develop productive thinking in the realm of fancy and because it also trains children in the use of words and language. A little later this ability is of immense value.

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[1] See H. L. Hollingworth, *Mental Growth and Decline* (Appleton), p. 221.

[2] Advice about how to do this may be found in the following books and pamphlets:

M. A. Bigelow, *Sex Education* (Macmillan).

T. W. Galloway, *The Father and His Boy* (Dutton).

B. C. Gruenberg, "Parents and Sex Education" (American Social Hygiene Association).

"The Teacher's Part in Social Hygiene" (Joint Committee on Health Problems in Education, 525 West 120th Street, New York).

"The Problem of Sex Education in Schools" (U. S. Public Health Service).

After approximately eight years of age, children are passing through a period of mental readjustment. They are now less interested in imaginative tales than in stories of fact. Sometimes the change seems quite abrupt but this is because the transition has not been closely followed. Interest in the practical results of the constructive imagination now becomes more noticeable. It is the time for hand work projects, for true stories of geography, and for the simpler facts of physics. Children are now more ready to test their plans that they may determine whether they will work. They have more patience in putting their thoughts into execution and in staying with their projects until they have finished them. This is the time when the lives of pioneers and explorers, and all sorts of historical adventures, interest them.

The importance of furnishing opportunity for the constructive imagination is in large part due to the means which it affords for draining off energy which might otherwise "strike in" and make the child morbid. Plenty of physical exercise with opportunity for constructive work keeps children from thinking too much about themselves and from excessive conscientiousness. The material with which the imagination works just before and during the early teens determines, to a large extent, the emotional and mental health of the child. The books which are read during this period are also tremendously important, and the selection should be made with the greatest care. The child should not be forced, but the right sort of books should lie around ready to be picked up.

There is a great deal of danger at this period that the boy or girl will lead two lives—one visible life of which parents and teachers know, and an inside one, egotistic, emotional, and imaginative. It is this inside life, with which parents too often are unfamiliar, that sometimes develops along morbid lines.

It is easy to starve the imagination of children and, consequently, the imaginative nutriment upon which they are fed should receive the same attention as is given to their physical diet. The life of fancy in childhood and adolescence plays an immensely important rôle in the health and stability of the emotions.

Belief in their power, characteristic of adolescents, should be nurtured but without giving them an abnormal notion of their own importance. Adolescence is the period when the field and material of fancy should be utilized in building ideals so that a balance between the inner and outer life of the child may be maintained.

The images of children are more intense than those of adults. This is so true that at times it is impossible for them to distinguish between memory images and images of fancy. In some cases, indeed, they cannot distinguish between what they see and hear, and images of their own creation. During the earlier years many children have imaginary companions. Una Hunt has given, in *Una Mary*, a striking picture of the companion of her childhood. This imaginary playmate was as real to her as though she were a living child. At times this inability of very young children to distinguish between fact and fancy has even more striking results.

A five-year-old boy, for example, returned home from the kindergarten with a harrowing story about the burning of the school building. All of the details were described—the terror of the pupils, the excitement of the teachers and the clanging of the bells of the fire wagons as they dashed up to the school. The child was greatly excited and clearly believed that he had seen what he described. Everything was pictured so vividly that the parents were much surprised, on telephoning to the school, to learn that there had been no fire. The statements of the youngster could, of course, have been called lies but the mother understood the meaning. She saw that her boy had been living through imaginary events of such intense interest that he believed he had seen what he was describing. He was training not merely his imagination but his power of description. He described the events so clearly and so vividly that, had they represented actual facts, his description would have been good literature for a child of his age.

To be sure, this picturing unreality as reality may continue too long, and to prevent the inner life of fancy from becoming abnormal children should be encouraged to check up their stories from time to time with the actual facts. The romancing of little children, however, should not be too rigorously restricted, but it should receive thoughtful attention lest it become a habit.

Night fears, which ghost stories are almost certain to produce, may also be caused by confusing what is actually seen and heard with the images of fancy. Giants, witches and dangerous people, in general, are often pictured by children in the dark after they have heard exciting stories about these monsters.

The ability of children to report correctly McGeoch found to increase between the ages of nine to fourteen.[3] Narrative reports are much more accurate than those given in reply to questions. The difference between successive ages, if not great, is consistent, and this emphasizes what the study of children has shown, that development is a gradual growth from one stage into another.

In concluding this brief discussion of the imagination, we wish again to emphasize the importance of the life of fancy during childhood for the nervous and emotional stability of the adult, and especially of women. The enormous sale of books on nervousness and worry is a sufficient indication of the importance of stabilizing the emotions in early life. Nervousness is a popular adult affliction to-day and it is not an imaginary disease. Its cause is usually to be found in the emotional life of childhood.

We have found then that the imagination is a tremendously important element in the development of children. The abuses, however, to which it is prone are many. It is necessary for inventive thinking but it must not be allowed to run wild.

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[3] John A. McGeoch, *American Journal of Psychology,* Vol. 40, p. 465.

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CHAPTER XXIII

ON PSYCHOANALYZING CHILDREN

THE "new psychology," for a number of years, has been what newspaper men call "front page stuff." There is a bit of humor in the pleasant conceit that the old psychology ended and the so-called new began with the appearance of Freud. Astounding claims are always pleasant, if they can be made to carry their weight, and for a time, so far as popular knowledge and approval went, the Freudians did usurp pretty nearly everything.

Like all new ideas, psychoanalysis made its contribution to psychology and then yielded to a new competitor for the front page of the daily press. Behaviorism is now running it neck and neck for popular attention. Freud has made certain definite contributions to psychology but this is not the place for their detailed discussion. Some knowledge by the reader of the Freudian psychology must be assumed. Our present purpose is to ascertain to what extent it may wisely be used in child study and in child training.

Many books have been written for parents based on psychoanalysis and every psychologist knows from the many letters received from parents that they have been trying to make use of it. The problem which confronts us here is not a complete appraisement of the Freudian theory. Our critical examination must be brief.

Two considerations are involved in psychoanalysis as a method in child training. These are distinct and, to avoid confusion, they will be treated separately. The first is a short discussion of the general validity of the Freudian theory, and the second is, should parents use it in training children?

According to Freud, all dreams have a significant meaning with sexual implications. This is more than doubtful. In the opinion of the present writer, dreams have the same cause and explanation as our waking thoughts. We would be more accurate, perhaps, were we to say that night dreams are much the same as day dreams. In both cases restraint of mental processes is released and, consequently, associations run wild. All of the dreams of several of the writer's students who dream frequently, are explained by experiences which can be recalled. They were caused by cerebral tension resulting from events that left vivid impressions, from worries, studying late at night and other experiences with which every one is familiar as causes of waking thoughts. In these cases there was no intimation of sexual wishes.

To be sure, dreams are often distorted, but this is to be expected when there is no controlling or guiding influence. In many dreams which the writer has before him, no reason for this distortion can be found in conflict with social conventions. They are merely unguided and, therefore, more or less fantastic.

For the "censor," as Freud defines it—"a very convenient phrase for a dynamic relationship"—there is abundant evidence. But this dynamic relationship between mental processes means simply the interplay of neural impulses. Some will be stronger than others and by their domination will direct the course of the dream.

As for the symbolism, so often but not always characteristic of dreams, there is neither doubt nor mystery. Our waking thoughts and language are frequently symbolic.

But to assume the same meaning for symbols in all persons and under all conditions of time and place, as the Freudians do, is unwarranted dogmatism.

Mountains, cliffs, wild animals, flowers, blossoms, bushes, woods, caves, jewels, piano-playing, knives, daggers, swords, guns and pistols, in dreams, have standardized meanings, according to Freud, which fit as accurately as the parts of a Ford car. Impossible! The assumption is too simple and universal. It explains too much.

Repression is not one of the new ideas introduced by Freud. It was known and written about before Freud was born. But he did give us a clear bird's-eye view of its mechanism—the way in which repression occurs—and that is glory enough for one man.

Mental conflict, again, stands out prominently as a Freudian principle in the popular mind. But conflict between impulses of the individual and the conventional social code of conduct was known long before Freud appeared upon the psychological stage. The views of the Freudian psychoanalysts about repression and conflict are so interwoven with their ideas of the content of the unconscious that we must stop a moment to consider it.

For Freud and his followers the content of the unconscious, if not simple, is at any rate very limited. The unconscious, says the founder of this school of thought, "is a region of the mind, the content of which is characterized by the attributes of being repressed, conative, instinctive, infantile, unreasoning, and predominantly sexual."

The definiteness and clearness of this description betrays an error in the theory. Some unconscious processes have not been repressed and yet they produce disturbing conflicts. Further, had we the time and space it could be shown that the unconscious processes are not always unreasoning. Witness the sudden solution of a problem upon which one has vainly worked for years; and the striking fact is that the solution usually comes when the investigator is thinking of something else.

Sexual ideas, again, as a predominant feature of the content, were not found to be the explanation of the dreams of many hospital patients during the late war. "In my own experience," says Rivers,[1] "cases arising out of the war which illustrate the Freudian theory of sexuality directly and obviously have been few and far between." After considering certain facts which might explain the rarity of these cases, Rivers adds that "there remains little to support the Freudian position in the form in which it is usually presented to us by its advocates." The content of the unconscious, as conceived by Freud and his disciples, is wrong because of its limitations.

The unconscious contains much that never becomes conscious. In some instances, probably in many, conflicts, or what psychologists more commonly call inhibitions, are the restraining force. Even in some of these cases, however, the desire is urgent to bring the facts to consciousness. This is evident when one is trying to perfect an invention or to recall a forgotten name. Any theory of the unconscious that fails to take account of these and other similar cases does not satisfy the facts.

The recent war emphasized fear—personal fear—as the kernel of the repressed complexes. To be sure, war, and the conditions amid which the soldiers lived, are different from the environment of children; but fear has its counterpart in various phases of child life. Fear of failure, for example, to say nothing about terrifying dreads which may inflame the mind like a festering ulcer because of some act which the child had been told is "sinful." Many times it is not the act but the rankling fear of the consequences that does the damage.

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[1] W. H. R. Rivers, *Instinct and the Unconscious* (Cambridge University Press), p. 164.

The contributions of Freud to psychological thought are sufficient to place him among the great discoverers in the field of psychology. These contributions are his emphasis upon the dynamic character of the mind, the clearness with which he has worked out the mechanism of these dynamic forces and stirred the thoughts of other psychologists, some of whom afterward revolted from his school and developed their own ideas regarding the content of the unconscious as well as the causes that produce repressed complexes.

We have dealt only briefly with what was called the first consideration involved in psychoanalysis as a method in child training. If what has been said is correct, Freud has made a distinct contribution to psychology by emphasizing the dynamic nature of the mind and by working out a mechanism which functions regardless of the nature and content of the unconscious. Let us now turn to the second point which was put in the form of a question: Should parents use psychoanalysis in training their children? In a day of cults this question is important.

If the view which has been sketched is correct, all dreams do not have meaning that is significant in interpreting repressed complexes. Some dreams of children are caused by indigestion. Then their only meaning for the mother is to consult a physician about the diet of the youngsters and to use common sense rather than psychoanalysis.

Further, we have said that the evidence does not support the Freudian principle that the unconscious consists of repressed thoughts predominantly sexual which indicate wishes. Sexual disturbances are always a possibility, especially as children approach the age of puberty, but prurient wishes should not be scented in every dream.

The writer has known personally of a good many cases in which adults have been made self-centered and finally morbid by being psychoanalyzed by practitioners of the Freudian school. If this is true of mature men and women, how much more certain is it to result disastrously in the case of young children.

This danger of putting into the heads of children notions that will produce exactly the result which the analysis is supposed to remedy is especially threatening when the psychoanalyst has only a superficial knowledge of the many causes of mental and emotional conflicts of children. And for those who have staked their all on one theory, other explanations do not exist. James's essay, "On a Certain Blindness in Human Beings,"[2] is significant in this connection. All of us have mental blind spots but they are not always the same in different persons, and each of us, as is usual with bias, is not aware of his own personal defect.

Then, too, there is always a certain mystery about the application of psychoanalysis. Except when used by an almost superman or woman, the method cannot be employed without more or less formality. The child is questioned about his dreams. Further questions suggest sex perversions which may never have entered the mind of the child. The risk of putting perverse thoughts into the mind of a child is always one of the hazards of the Freudian analysis. And if you put them there of course you find them.

If psychoanalysis is used with children, it should be employed without their realizing what is being done. Complexes are a fact and parents should be watchful to discover them in time. Compensation should also be reckoned with, though the notion, if not the name, was known long before Freud, Adler, or Jung were playing in the nursery with their toys. Children tend to compensate in various ways for defects of strength and lack of perseverance. If a child cannot whip the boy who abuses him, he may try less commendable ways of winning favorable attention.

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[2] William James, *Talks to Teachers* (Holt), p. 229.

Here there are definite sex differences. Girls are inclined to get their ends and secure a victory over their more winsome rivals by slander, gossip, and other "whispering" methods of attack.

Every one will probably agree that a complicated psychological procedure requires not only intensive knowledge of the principles of the method but, in addition, a thorough fundamental understanding of the whole field of psychology. This is especially true when one is trying to delve into the secret recesses of the mind of a child. There is such a confusing labyrinth of obscure passages with hidden chambers in which perhaps are "stored" thoughts, feelings, and emotions which are not "on exhibition."

Our language must not be taken too literally, but boys and girls at all times, and particularly during early adolescence, are a mixture of mysterious feelings; and of all of them they surely are not fully conscious. How, then, is the parent to penetrate these secret alcoves of the human mind and discover their contents that they may understand their boys and girls? Naturally, the Freudians answer, "by psychoanalysis." But this is a hazardous method, especially when the searcher is looking for something which he expects to find; and the Freudians know exactly what they are searching for.

At first glance, knowing what one is looking for seems to be an advantage, but the trouble with it is that one is practically certain to find what is expected. Only a superhuman man or woman can avoid suggestions, and we do not have many who are superhuman.

Children are peculiarly suggestible, and all sorts of malignant thoughts and fears may be put into their heads by "cross-examiners" who are working on a definite theory regarding what ought to be the trouble. The Freudians say, in reply to this, that they never make suggestions. One who is omniscient might succeed in avoiding them, but it so happens that no one is omniscient. Hence the ever-present danger.

The very truth of the Freudian mechanism, its verification during the recent war, the fact that unpleasant thoughts—those which are repugnant to the individual—do produce conflicts, gives immense importance to the ideas that are put into the minds of children. The thoughts and beliefs suggested to them should be selected with the greatest care, and with full knowledge of the tremendously important rôle that they are going to play in the personality of the child.

It is necessary to repeat that the ideas and thoughts which are introduced indirectly have more influence in the development of the child than those which are given directly by advice and admonition. Advice, as we have said before, children are inclined to discount. They think that these ideas are foolish notions of adults which they may be so unfortunate as to get later but with which they do not want to bother at present. Indirect suggestions, however, have a subtle influence upon the mental growth of children because of the unostentatious way in which they are presented.

This is the very nature of suggestion. In it lies the potency of the idea which is presented. "Let's do this" is immensely more influential than "Do this."

We have said many times, and it cannot be repeated too often, that human nature is disturbingly complex. Probably no field of knowledge is so difficult to understand. This is particularly true of children because their ideas, emotions, and ideals, are in the formative state. Their personality is still in the making.

One fact which is often overlooked is that boys and girls do not understand themselves. They are as much perplexed by the deviations from the very crooked path of social and moral rectitude as are their parents. Fathers and mothers would do well to remember the story told of General Grant. When he faced the enemy in one of his first important engagements, as the tale runs, he was so nervous that he had little confidence in his judgment. Then, as he reflected, he concluded that the opposing commander was probably as frightened as he himself. This stabilized his nerves and gave him poise for thought. He decided to find out what was in the mind of the "other fellow."

This is what parents and teachers should do—discover what is in the mind of their boys and girls. Not an easy undertaking, you say, and with this the writer frankly agrees. Its difficulty is increased by the fact that the youngsters themselves do not always clearly know. In that respect they differ from General Grant's adversary.

Discovering what is in the mind of a child is made more difficult because boys and girls are such clever little diplomats. Many subjects they know are socially taboo and their feelings regarding these matters they are likely to conceal from adults. Here, probably, sex questions and indiscretions take the first place.

It is generally agreed now that sex problems and sexual behavior should be talked over with children. But every one will admit, also, that the discussion of these subjects is exceedingly delicate. It is much easier in such conversations with boys or girls to make disastrous mistakes than to accomplish the purpose of the discussion. If a child is made to believe that his dreams are the results of "bad" thoughts which have become fixated in his mind the result will not be happy.

Much depends upon the particular situation, the characteristics of the boy or girl, and the degree of intimacy that exists between the parent and the child. But the air of mystery which invested these questions during the childhood of most of the readers of this book is now known to have bad results. Mystery always stimulates curiosity which will be gratified in some way. If it is not satisfied by the parents, the desired information will be obtained in less desirable ways.

Psychoanalysis has become so widely popularized that classes have been formed to instruct mothers in its use. Books for the lay public have been written and many parents are obsessed with the charm of the mysterious words and phrases which they catch in social intercourse as well as in the popular books that have been flooding the market.

The writer has talked with many mothers who used glibly the phraseology of the Freudians. They talked about fixation, sublimation, conflict, repression, and the "unconscious mind." But it was always evident that these words were vague phrases which they had caught, so to speak, on the jump. They conveyed no clear knowledge to the mothers who were using them. Herein lies the danger of acting upon them in the training of their children.

If a child has dreams which are clearly and definitely sexual, the best treatment is vigorous outdoor athletic sports. In addition, since the dream then indicates that the time has arrived for a sane understanding of sex matters, the mother or father should have a wholesome conversation with the boy or girl about the whole subject. The meaning of the evolution of sex should be made clear, the effects of indulgence should be stressed but not so much as to create morbid fears in the child, and an effort should be made to give a clear understanding of the desirable relations between the sexes.

We said a moment ago that the Freudian mechanism is a fact which must be reckoned with. This, perhaps, is Freud's contribution to psychology. The unconscious was known and discussed while Freud was in his cradle. Even the dynamic notion of this mechanism is not altogether new. But before Freud's time the mechanism was rigidly mechanical. The unconscious conflict was between ideas which had a definite existence below the level of consciousness.

Freud introduced the idea of a conflict between mental processes rather than between distinct ideas. This was a tremendous advance in our knowledge of the way in which the mind works. He has also, as we have said, started other investigators on exploring expeditions, and these explorers have returned with an enormous quantity of information about the submerged part of the mind of children. We know now that there are almost innumerable ways in which a child can deviate from what we call the normal.

This last statement the Freudians would not agree with because they have definitely delineated the cause and nature of the deviation. This, in the opinion of the present writer, is their mistake. They make the mind of the child too uniform. Their theory is too comprehensive and inclusive. It explains and proves too much.

Each boy and girl requires an individual diagnosis which should not be based on one theory but should grow out of complete, well-digested information about the causes and meaning of the changes, peculiarities and other disturbances of childhood. If some teachers and parents say that this is too big a proposition to handle, the reply is that in no other way can one penetrate into the hidden recesses of a child's mind. You will, however, be surprised at the way problems of childhood will clear up if you only get on intimate terms with your boys and girls, and try seriously to inform yourself about the mental and emotional pitfalls of childhood and youth. The habit and psychiatric clinics have been established to try to remedy your mistakes.

Morbid emotional conditions of men and women, as well as nervous instability, were produced during childhood. To say that these conditions are inherited is rationalized evasion of responsibility. Children may inherit a frail nervous system which should receive the thoughtful, personal care that sick nerves need, but they do not inherit particular types of morbidity. Indeed, they do not inherit morbidity at all. Parents make it in the home and teachers help to nourish it in the schools.

Now, one of the surest ways to create a morbid condition in children is to psychoanalyze them. It turns the attention inward, and an oversensitive child is inclined to examine himself and his motives too commonly without being encouraged to do so.

The mind of a healthy child is continually directed outward. Square dealing with one's associates and intimate frankness with parents and teachers will work wonders in creating a healthy mind and in stabilizing the emotions. The first, wise parents will openly advocate and the second will be the outgrowth of the interested and helpful attitude of the father and mother.

The hypersensitive child tends towards morbidity because of his very supersensitiveness. He is inclined not only to overemphasize the personal application of the actions of others but such a child also tends to overemphasize the impropriety or even wickedness of his own acts. And psychoanalysis always increases this natural tendency to give too much thought to the morality of behavior. Do not forget that an ingenuous personality is our aim.

The ideational and emotional defects of adults were introduced into their minds in some way during childhood. If they have fears, anxieties, or obsessions, they got them in the home. If they have "moods," the home is again to blame. If they try to outwit the difficulties and unpleasant facts of life by evasion instead of boldly facing them, the cause once more lies in the training of the home. All of these "peculiarities" are associated with nervous instability —the neuroses for which Freud assumes one "predominant" explanation.

Books are written explaining all childhood troubles and maladjustments by one theory or another without any discussion of other causes. Many of them are based on the "unconscious mind," on the mysterious ways in which it works, on the complexes buried within its depths, and on the mental surgery needed for their removal. Conversation with women who have dabbled in books on these subjects, written for popular consumption, or have listened to lectures before their clubs, has convinced the writer that in some matters at least a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. Many mothers are using phrases which are almost as intelligible to them as the language of Hottentots.

After reading these books one would think that all children were created by one pattern which has just been discovered. But if one fact in child psychology is more certain than any other, it is that children were not made on one plan. Their abnormal behavior does not have a single cause. They were not built on a rule-of-thumb principle.

"I am completely bewildered," said a mother to the writer recently. "I read one book and everything seems quite clear, though when I try to apply the teaching it may not work. Then I read another and find a different explanation in the unconscious for the behavior of my child. Now I feel lost."

Thoughtful parents and teachers used psychoanalysis long before Freud gave it a best-selling name. The difference is in what it was called. Letting children talk themselves out of their more or less unconscious perplexities is not new. A few parents, indeed, have been intelligent enough and sufficiently observing to get "inside" knowledge about the more or less repressed thoughts of their children.

If youngsters lead a normal active life with an abundance of joyous adventures in which their parents participate in spirit if not in fact, repressions and disturbing complexes are less likely to appear. These mental conditions occur in children who for one reason or another are excluded from conversation with their parents about their inmost thoughts, feelings, emotions, and instinctive eruptions.

Children require different treatment which should grow out of a personal diagnosis. A complete clinical picture of the individual child should be obtained. If the parents have not the needed information a competent psychiatrist should be consulted. The disastrous effect of following a single rule or theory is illustrated by the press report of an interview with an American youth just sentenced, in a court of justice in London.

"I was diffident," he said, "and so I took a course in psychoanalysis for the development of my personality." Evidently the course did what it claimed to do since he became "dazzled" by his own "charms," and learned to use them with remarkable success, and with final disaster.

It looks as though curing a boy of an "inferiority complex" requires about as much knowledge and skill as removing his appendix. The difference is that in relieving him of his complex you may put something else in that is worse.

Evidently, in briefly summarizing, the first thing that is necessary in training children is knowledge of child psychology, and the second need is more knowledge. Then comes the requirement of a complete acquaintance with the thoughts and feelings of the individual boy or girl; and there is no copyrighted way of getting this information.

Sex irregularities are immensely important but there are also other causes of emotional unrest. What is the effect of the treatment in the home and by associates? Is the child helped to form reasonable social judgments or is he made to feel that his opinions do not count? In the attempt to make him properly self-assertive is he becoming self-centered, callous about the rights of others? Is he malicious in his actions? Is he socially adaptive while self-respecting, or is he ignored, perhaps disliked or ridiculed? Does he dominate those who are younger or weaker than himself while behaving in a more or less fawning, servile way to those who can thrash him if they wish? All of these questions and many others are significant in judging the personality of a boy; and when applied to girls the only necessary change is a slight variation of the wording.

Whatever bears upon the personality has an intimate relation to the content of the unconscious, since personality is to a large extent the product of the stress and strain of conflicting impulses of which one is at most only vaguely conscious.

If boys and girls are trained to a healthy mental and emotional life from earliest childhood through the early years of adolescence, it will be unnecessary later to dig into their submerged thoughts and feelings to find and remove the disturbing constituents. It is better to avoid the formation of pathological complexes than to remove them by mental surgery after they have become established.

Rivers and others found during the war that the remedial treatment for distressing memories was frank discussion of them. This is also the best way to prevent their formation. Close contact with one's children or pupils, without the appearance of either superiority or condescension, suggests the method. If both the mother and father are "good fellows" with their children, showing authority only on those rare occasions when discipline is needed, pathological complexes are not likely to be formed because there will be no reason to conceal things from the parents.

In the home there should be no tyranny, coddling, nor adult selfish indifference. Judge Lindsey did not need to psychoanalyze the boys who came to his court. He knew their unconscious feelings as well as their conscious thoughts. His boys confided in him because they felt that he was one of them, interested in their successes, their failures, and their troubles. If parents would remain the confidants of their boys and girls, unconscious complexes would cease to be a cause of worry. There would be no repression in their children because there would be no secret "sins" to repress; and without repression, conflicts would be conscious contradictions about behavior which could be harmonized by frank discussion.

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CHAPTER XXIV

MEASURING INTELLIGENCE

A GREAT deal of work has been done in recent years in measuring mental ability and growth. Every one is familiar, of course, with the tests which have become so popular; but, unfortunately, too often they have been made into some mysterious method of divination. It is important, therefore, that we understand what may be reasonably expected from tests and what they cannot do.

The first question that is important in considering intelligence and its measurement is the meaning of intelligence, and here a curious fact immediately strikes us. No two mental testers agree on the definition of intelligence.[1] So widely do these definitions vary that Ballard was led to remark that "no common nucleus of meaning is discoverable."

One writer in the symposium to which we have referred, frankly admits that he is not interested in the definition of intelligence. But surely, to be measuring the ability of children without interest in the nature of this ability is remarkable. It means condemning large numbers of boys and girls without knowing why one is condemning them.

Lest this may seem to be an overstatement, let us quote from a book by one of the leaders in mental testing.[2] "Facts have been presented," Terman says, "which show that the limits of a child's educability can be fairly accurately predicted by means of mental tests given in the first school year. By repeated tests, these limits can be determined accurately enough for all practical purposes by the end of the child's fifth or sixth school year." It is certainly a bold assurance that at eleven years of age a child's future can be predicted by these tests. At that time of life, if the tests so decree, he is to be marked with the stamp of permanent inferiority. An even bolder statement is made by Franzen when he says: "A child of ten has the same intelligence as he had at three though he has attained greater mental growth by that time."

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[1] For the various and diversified definitions given, see the symposium on the meaning of intelligence in the *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol. 12.

[2] Lewis M. Terman, *The Intelligence of School Children* (Houghton Mifflin), pp. 268-269.

The mental tests made in the army during the recent war are often referred to in support of certain rather doubtful views. That the median mental age of these soldier boys practically coincided with the median age of leaving school is overlooked. Those who continued in school are said to have been a selected lot, though we have no evidence for this beyond the dogmatic assertion of the extreme disciples of mental testing.

Certain other facts have been brought out by recent study of these army tests. Brigham, for example, found,[3] that the immigrants who have more recently arrived in this country were less intelligent, according to the army tests, than those who had been here for a number of years. Further, the intelligence of these foreigners increased, if we accept their scores, with the length of residence in this country. On the average, those who had been here twenty years or more, showed an intelligence equal to native Americans. Why?

It may be, of course, that the earlier immigrants were a more selected group and that succeeding immigrations were made up of young men with steadily decreasing intelligence. This is a possible opinion and Brigham favors it. But there is another equally plausible explanation, namely, that the more recent immigrants in the draft were older when they left their native country and that, as a result, they were less familiar with the American language and culture. This view is supported by some investigations that Colvin made.[4]

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[3] Carl C. Brigham, *A Study of American Intelligence* (Princeton University Press).

Other explanations, which give some value to the effect of education in the schools, have been suggested, but the devotees of mental testing have not seen fit to refer to them. One explanation or another of these interesting facts found by testing those included in the army draft, may be accepted or rejected according to one's preference.

Another remarkable fact appears in these army tests.[5] The tabulation by age of the scores of officers shows a decline in intelligence between the ages of twenty and sixty. The officers under twenty-one were the most intelligent. Between the ages of fifty, or thereabouts, and sixty there is a decrease in intelligence of about 20 per cent of the twenty-year level.

This is certainly curious unless we adopt the obvious explanation that the Army Alpha Tests measure the effect of education. Is it not a reasonable assumption that the younger officers only recently out of school did better in these tests because they were not so far away from their school days as were the older officers? Further, school methods have improved since these older men were boys and, if we adopt the evident explanation, this improvement would also play its part in assisting the younger officers to make better scores. At any rate, it would be rather incongruous to conclude that officers under twenty-one were more intelligent than the older officers, some of whom accomplished deeds that made them famous.

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[4] See National Society for the Study of Education, *Twenty-first Year Book* (Public School Publishing Co.), pp. 21-22.

[5] *Memoirs of the National Academy of Sciences* (Government Printing Office), Vol. 15, p. 814.

Doubt regarding what mental tests actually measure has been voiced by several who, in general, may be said to agree with this method of determining ability. "The mental capacity designated by the term intelligence," says Freeman,[6] "seems to me to include, besides the elements which are usually measured by our tests, certain other types of capacity which they measure scarcely at all."

The relation between intelligence and the previous environment of the child may be understood if we assume that a child has been brought up without any educational advantages of any sort. One who has lived in the streets and escaped the truant officer is as good an illustration as any. Such a child would, of course, require a peculiar kind of tests based upon the environment in which he had lived. Many things would unquestionably have been learned which would have a definite bearing upon intelligence but the material and ability would be different from that of a child brought up under good school conditions.

A more extreme case is given by Colvin who says:[7] "The brightest European child, reared from birth by a group of African Pigmies, would appear as a moron or worse if later transported to a highly civilized and cultured environment."

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[6] Frank N. Freeman, *Journal of Educational Psychology,* Vol. 12, p. 133.

[7] S. S. Colvin, National Society for the Study of Education, Twenty-first Year Book (Public School Publishing Co.), p. 18.

In answering the question, What is measured? Colvin continues: "We never measure inborn intelligence; we always measure acquired intelligence, but we infer from differences in acquired intelligence differences in native endowment when we compare individuals in a group who have had common experiences, and note the differences in the attainment of these individuals."[8]

As a matter of fact, no two individuals have had "common experiences." Even brothers and sisters do not have common experiences in the home. If there were no other reason for making this assertion, it would be sufficient to say that different personalities produce different experiences. Even with the same parents, the varieties of experiences become more evident, however, when we consider the different kinds of teachers under whom the boys and girls have studied, as well as the variations in their associates in the school.

Not a few instances have been observed of an amazing increase in the intelligence quotient of children with no other possible explanation than the change from an unsuccessful or uncongenial teacher to a better one. A single instance will be a sufficient illustration. A score of cases could easily be given were it necessary.

The small daughter of a university professor, taking a test with the other members of her school, was found to have an intelligence quotient of 75. After a rather searching conversation with the child the father discovered that she disliked her teacher and school so much that she was making no progress in her studies. Perhaps the teacher was not altogether to blame. This is unimportant. The significant fact is that teacher and pupil were uncongenial. Her father, therefore, placed her in another school and when, six months later, she again took intelligence tests her quotient was 140.

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[8] *Ibid.*, p. 19.

The importance of these facts is seen when we remember that the value of mental measurements, and of all inferences drawn from them, rests upon the assumption that education in its widest sense, including the stimulation and inspiration of those compared in the tests, has either been identical, or is of no significance for the result.

The question, What do the tests actually measure? is the crucial point of the whole problem. If "the limits of a child's educability can be fairly accurately predicted by means of mental tests given in the first year," as Terman has said, "and if by repeated tests these limits can be determined accurately enough for all practical purposes," at about eleven years of age then, clearly, the environmental conditions of school, associates, and the stimulation gained from reading and from experience with inspiring persons, have no effect. If a boy or girl is ever to wake up mentally, it will be before the eleventh year is passed. This is splendid fuel for defense mechanisms.

Now it so happens that some very suggestive investigations have been conducted to ascertain the effect of the environment upon the intelligence quotient. As a result of extended tests, Burt has found[9] that about 54 per cent of what is measured by the Binet tests is not native intelligence but the effect of experience and schooling. The child's mental age, found by the Binet tests, shows, according to Burt, not only "the amount of intelligence with which he is congenitally endowed; . . . it is also an index, largely though perhaps not mainly, of the mass of scholastic information and skill which . . . he has progressively accumulated in school."

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[9] Cyril Burt, *Mental and Scholastic Tests* (King, London), pp. 182*ff*.

Another important investigation has been carried through by Hugh Gordon.[10] He compared a group composed of physically defective children, gypsy children, and canal-boat children, with a second group composed of those who were definitely backward in the elementary school. The investigation showed the same correlation between mental ratios—intelligence quotients—and the period of school attendance, as between the educational ratios and school attendance. Gordon also found a high correlation between relative educational attainments and intelligence quotients.

The mental age of the canal-boat children, tested by Gordon, is also impressive. These children were not mentally defective but their schooling had been almost negligible. Gordon found that, according to the Binet tests, the older ones of this canal-boat group were duller than the younger. At six years of age, the intelligence quotients of these children ranged between 90 and 100. This, of course, means that they had average intelligence. Those over nine years of age, however, with one exception, ranked 70 or below. In other words, the younger children, as judged by the Binet test, had at least average intelligence quotients, but the older ones, with one exception, according to the same tests, were feeble-minded.

One of the conclusions which Gordon drew from his investigation is worth quoting: "The result of this investigation clearly indicates, so far as these tests are concerned, that the [intelligence tests] are tests of school attainments; that, in fact, scholastic tests, properly standardized for age, do yield results that are for all practical purposes of equal value for determining so-called intelligence. The lack of schooling has, in fact, affected equally both scholastic attainments and 'intelligence.' That such scholastic attainments are in part due to real intelligence, it is hardly necessary to add."

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[10] Hugh Gordon, "Mental Scholastic Tests among Retarded Children," London. Board of Education publication.

An investigation of the influence of schooling and of other environmental conditions on the intelligence quotient of children has also been made by D. W. Willard.[11] Terman's Group Test, forms A and B, were used, and the children participating in the investigation were pupils from the seventh to the twelfth grade inclusive. Form A was given first and after a little more than seven months had passed, form B was given to the same children. About sixteen pupils had dropped out since the first test was given. Among other conclusions, Willard draws three which are significant for those who wish to gain further information regarding the effect of the environment on the intelligence quotient.

The influence of the school environment, this investigator found, "had a decided influence in stimulating ability, so far as test performance measures ability." Further, "The presence of growth in considerable quantities for all ages and all classes gave evidence of the effect of environment irrespective of native capacity." Finally, "On the whole, about half the growth measured by the tests for all the grade groups appears to be due to the development of native capacity, and about half was due to training. The proportion in favor of training tended to be more than half for the upper grades, and less than half for the lower grades." The striking agreement between the results of Willard's investigation with those of Burt and Gordon, already mentioned, is obvious. The question, What do the tests measure? will not down.

Another investigation along similar lines has been conducted by Helen T. Woolley.[12] In this case it was children of the preschool age to whom the tests were given. One of Dr. Woolley's conclusions is especially pertinent. It seems "to be true that a certain part of what we later call 'level of intelligence' may be due to the opportunities to learn given to young children. Very young children may show striking increases of intelligence quotients when placed in a very superior environment. We do not, as yet, know how permanent these increases are. What evidence we have shows that they tend to be maintained, though perhaps at not quite so high a level. Doubtless, much will depend upon whether the superior environment can be maintained over a long enough period to consolidate the gains the child has made, and to make them a permanent part of his equipment."

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[11] D. W. Willard, *School and Society*, Vol. 16, p. 750.

The effect of regular training in silent reading seems also to be shown in the scores of the Otis Group Tests. This investigation was conducted by Wendell White.[13] An experimental class took the training in silent reading and, during the same period, there was a control group which did not receive the training. The Otis Tests were given to both groups before and after the training period. The scores in each group were higher in the second test but in the group that received the training the increase was distinctly greater than in the other. Here, again, the inference is patent and seems conclusive for these groups of children under the conditions of the experiment. Among the conclusions which White draws from this investigation are the following: "The net increases in scores of the [experimental group] are due to educational influence of the reading drills." Then White adds: "The net increases in the scores made are all significant."

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[12] Helen T. Woolley, *School and Society*, Vol. 21, p. 476.

[13] Wendell White, *Educational Administration and Supervision*, Vol. 9, pp. 179*ff*.

Florence Mateer, also, raises serious doubts of the diagnostic infallibility of the intelligence quotient[14] and H. M. Johnson thinks that these tests, not having an independent measure of their validity, are more akin to magic than to science.[15]

It is obvious that the writer has selected investigations which seem to show that the school and training exert a positive influence upon intelligence as revealed by standard tests. The reason for making this selection is that many mental testers not only ignore these investigations but also deny the facts which they seem to prove. To say that the environing conditions of the school and home have no effect upon ability, that contact with persons who stimulate ambition and effort, are useless, puts mental functions in a class by themselves and maintains that for them exercise and practice serve no useful purpose.

If we pass over physical functions which are, of course, of a different order, this position is not justified by tests of mental functions upon which experiments have been made. It is not true of memory, for example. Ability to recall, we know, is greatly improved by exercise. Sometimes, indeed, this improvement is so remarkable as to be sensational.

Perhaps in this attempt to present certain phases of mental testing that have not received the emphasis which they deserve, the writer has given the impression that he believes that the tests have no value. He, therefore, hastens to assure the reader that this is not true. He believes in these tests, but he insists that they give only a partial picture—

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[14] *Pedagogical Seminary,* Vol. 25, p. 369.

[15] *Psychological Review,* Vol. 35, p. 328.

at times, indeed, a distorted view—of the ability of boys and girls. An impartial judge of their worth must be mightily influenced by Colvin's statement which has been repeatedly verified.

"It cannot be too strongly emphasized," he says, "that *no test to determine intelligence is valid unless the individual tested has had a reasonable opportunity to learn about the various elements involved in the test and has also been interested in learning.*"[16]

The answers to tests should not be accepted mechanically, as is so frequently the case, but should be interpreted by some one who understands the curious ways in which the minds of children work. For this reason, group tests, when the examiner does not know each individual child, do not give as satisfactory results as individual tests. It is well known, for example, that some children try to be smart and, consequently, answer some of the questions in ways which must not only be interpreted but which require an understanding of the individual child. This, once more, brings us back to a clinical picture of the youngster tested, and from this picture, as Colvin says, interest should not be omitted. The entire personality must be examined, the way in which the child has reacted to the opportunity to learn, and the causes of failure to react with interest if the response has been that of resistance or distrust.

Mental tests certainly do measure something. Of this there can be no question. But it yet remains to be proven that this "something" can properly be called intelligence, if this word has any reference whatever to ability in achievement. The wide disagreement regarding what intelligence is, offers by itself sufficient evidence to convince an impartial jury that the testers themselves do not know what they are testing. The investigations from which we have quoted indicate that what is measured is acquisitions.

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[16] Colvin, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

Mental testers, in the opinion of the writer, have made too broad and sweeping claims. This alone should make one hesitate to follow meekly in their trail. Exaggeration is quite common with all new and brilliant discoveries, and Binet's work in measuring intelligence must certainly be classed among the great psychological discoveries of recent times. When, however, the claim is made that at eleven or twelve years of age the future of children can be determined "for all practical purposes" and that "this early, at least, vocational training and vocational guidance should begin,"[17] one who is familiar with the boyhood days of men of great eminence must withhold agreement. It makes human intelligence too simple.

Intelligence tests have been used for several years with the lowest third of those applying for admission to Washington University and the subsequent college career of these boys and girls has not justified the sweeping claims of mental testers.

The writer believes that mental tests are definitely useful. This has unquestionably been proven. But whether they should be the sole means of determining the future of boys and girls is quite another matter. We have said in another connection that some children mature slowly. Not all of them show their ability at eleven years of age. Grant is a striking example. He was not conspicuous at West Point. In the junior class he was the last of eighteen to be selected for the position of sergeant, and his later standing was so low that he was dropped to the position of a private. He was never a leader among his classmates. He graduated number twenty-one and, after leaving the military academy, he failed in everything that he undertook until he made his career in the army. The Stanford *Genetic Studies of Genius* say that "his practical ability was considerable." Since throughout young manhood he failed in everything which he undertook, the evidence for practical ability is difficult to find. The same *Studies* say: "Evidence of analytic power is wholly lacking." This is true during his early life, but it was his ability to analyze situations and experiences that brought him his military fame. The fact is that he developed slowly. He had not attained his ability—shall we say intelligence?—at eleven or at twice that age.

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[17] Terman, *op. cit.*, p. 269.

In closing this brief presentation of facts and investigations which have not received the attention that they warrant, the writer feels that he can hardly do better than refer to the vain attempts of G. Stanley Hall to pass some dozen well-known tests. The confession from which these quotations are made was published in *Plain Talk*.[18] Hall tried, at least once, every new thing that came out. In the case of the intelligence tests, however, anxious to prove to himself that he was not weak-minded, he tried many.

First of all, he tried a well-known assembling test which has been largely used in the army but was new to him. After fifty minutes, he failed to complete the work, "but all these stunts were done in eight minutes by an assistant in the laboratory work-shop." Then he took up one of Thurston's tests for freshmen entering college. The time allotted was twenty minutes, and Hall succeeded in completely mastering it in thirty-eight minutes. On the second Thurston test, however, he fell down. After fifty-four minutes of hard work, there remained several questions which he could not answer. "Here," Hall says, "my time was about twice too long so that my marks should be about fifty on the scale of 100—and from this should be discounted failure to answer five per cent of the questions."

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[18] G. Stanley Hall, *Plain Talk,* November, 1927.

As a result of this bad showing, Hall felt that he had been too ambitious, so he took up Meyers' tests for young children in the grades. He was told to draw "a line from the first circle to the last circle that shall pass below the second and fourth circles and above the third and fifth circle" and much more of the same thing. Here he scored another failure. He was required as he said, to hold in memory, after one hearing, about fifty words and this he couldn't do. His failure here was almost complete.

Then Hall went to the Otis and National tests. "Here I could not and cannot find a word which is exactly the opposite of 'because' or of 'if.'" With Kuhlmann's tests, he scored a "rather low psychological age," and with Bonser's reasoning test he was outclassed by a girl of twelve.

The tests of Pintner, McCall, Munroe, Haggarty, Trabue, the Ohio tests for students, the Downey will-profile and Seashore's tests for music, in which he had always had an amateurish interest and considerable ability, gave him no comfort. Finally, as Hall says, he came on De Sanctis' fool-finding tests, which convinced him that he was not quite a moron.

With the investigations that we have quoted, and Hall's personal experience with the tests, we close this brief discussion. If we have seemed to overemphasize the critical studies, it is because few mental testers have given them even the courtesy of a footnote reference.

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CHAPTER XXV

SUPERIOR CHILDREN

BEFORE you skin a possum you must catch him, is an old saying; and this philosophical observation is also true of superior children. We know a possum when we see one, but are we quite sure that we know a superior child?

Use tests, you say? Certainly, we are using them regularly and find them valuable; but are they infallible? May we not miss some superior children? May we not also include in our list some who later turn out to be inferior? We cannot help wondering about this. The orthodox testers do not wonder. They know. They are fundamentalists. They have found the keystone of ability. Perhaps they have, but we continue to wonder.

What do the tests measure? Original mental endowment which is unaffected by the quality of education or by the environment in its widest sense? Or, do tests, perhaps, measure achievement? A good many are swinging back to this view. Spearman,[1] Webb,[2] and Garnett[3] do not belong in this class, but they think that they have found other factors in ability besides general intelligence in its usually accepted meaning.

Several other questions, also, are important in considering superior children. Are we certain that early precocity will be permanent, and again are we positive that absence of early precocity denies unusual, if not superior, ability? What are we going to do with a superior child when we think that we have found one? These are the questions with which we will deal in this brief discussion. They raise fundamental problems in child training.

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[1] C. E. Spearman, *The Abilities of Man* (Macmillan).

[2] *British Journal of Psychology,* Monograph Supplement, No. 3.

[3] *Proceedings of the Royal Society,* Vol. 96.

The question, Are we certain that early precocity will be permanent? is not so easily answered as the statistics about the childhood of geniuses and men of eminence would lead one to assume. Admitting, for the moment, that all geniuses were precocious children—a supposition contrary to fact, as we used to say about certain Latin subjunctives—we should not forget the patent fact that these statistics deal only with those whose future career proved that they were geniuses. If there are exceptionally bright children who do not maintain their early promise, then the precocity of geniuses loses much of its force. Eminent men and women who were clever children are then a small minority of those whose childhood awakened great expectations. There is something in Goethe's remark that "if children grew up according to early indications, we should have nothing but geniuses."

To find that all geniuses were precocious during childhood is quite different from saying that all precocious children will turn out to be superior men or women. Whether this last statement is true can be determined only after the records of large numbers of "superior children" have been preserved and their life history has been followed to learn what they accomplish. Otherwise, we are ignoring the remarkably suggestive question of that wise old Greek who, when shown the thank offerings to Neptune given by those whom the god had saved from drowning, said to the attendant who was displaying the proof of Neptune's power, "Now, will you kindly show me the offerings of those whom Neptune allowed to drown?"

It will be remembered that we asked another question. Are we certain that absence of early precocity denies superior ability? This query, of course, is closely connected with the one which we have just raised. Those who answer the first in the affirmative are quite certain to give the same reply to this question. This is the reason for the segregation of "superior" children from those of less innate ability. The sheep should be separated from the goats.

Now, regardless of final conclusions, the discussion of these two questions will, naturally, vary with one's belief about our ability to distinguish human sheep from human goats during the early years. Some mental testers believe that they can do this, and they are convinced that they have found the formula for an infallible distinction between the two species.

A Stanford University group has studied the childhood of a large number of geniuses and has given an intelligence quotient to each one of these boys and girls who afterward became eminent. We pass over the fact that, by selecting those who have done things, these investigators tacitly admit that the final test of intelligence is achievements. One must not be too insistent upon consistency.

We shall examine the justification for these quotients in the case of certain geniuses whose childhood we have studied. At present, we are interested in the question, Was not the judgment of these investigators, in a good many cases, an *ex post facto* decision?

If the following discussion is thought to be largely a review of the Stanford *Studies*, our excuse is that they are the most comprehensive attempt to show that mental superiority is bound to reveal itself in early childhood. This is a fundamental question in the training and education of children. If the authors of the *Studies* have established their position, it is a tremendous psychological achievement. But if, on the other hand, it can be shown from their own book that, in the case of many men and women not only of eminence but of genius, no clear proof of superior intelligence was discovered during early childhood, then finding and training superior children becomes a wholly different problem from that which the authors of the *Studies* assume it to be.

The present writer does not maintain that, in the case of many geniuses, there is not a positive correlation between early and later abilities. It would be strange were it otherwise. But the vital question is, can this positive correlation always be discovered before the child reaches Terman's "dead line" of eleven years, or even somewhat later? In other words, are we sure that by assuming an early correlation we do not miss some latent geniuses?

This is not an academic question. If superior ability, not discernible during early years, may be discovered by improved training in the home and by better methods in the schools, it is of immense importance for the rearing and teaching of children.

Once more, the fact that some geniuses develop without thoughtful attention does not prove that others of ability have not fallen by the wayside. Chance, good fortune for which neither parents nor teachers were responsible, has come to the aid of some boys and girls—we have ample evidence of what a single book or an inspiring man or woman has done at times—but is it wise to trust to luck to compensate for our negligence?

Before surveying the list of eminent men and women it may be well to repeat, for emphasis, the question which was asked above. Admitting the accuracy of the estimates of the collaborators in the Stanford *Studies* in the intelligence quotients given to these children who afterward became geniuses, what about those whom Neptune overlooked? Let us now turn to the *Studies.*

The first thing that strikes our attention is that all of the selected cases are not as clear as that of John Stuart Mill who learned Greek at three years of age, studied Plato at seven, and conic sections, spherics, and Newton's arithmetic at nine. Young Mill certainly deserved the I.Q. of 190 which the compilers of the *Studies* gave him.

Linnæus, with an intelligence quotient of 125, was thought by his gymnasium director to be fit only for some manual labor. The suggestion was made to the boy's father that his son learn the trade of cobbling shoes. The following note was given to young Linnæus for the information of the authorities of the university to which he was going. "Youth at school may be compared to shrubs in a garden, which will sometimes, though rarely, elude all the care of the gardener, but if transplanted into a different soil may become fruitful trees. With this view, and no other, the bearer is sent to the university, where it is possible that he may meet with a climate propitious to his progress." It looks as though Linnæus' *Genera Plantarum,*[4] published when Linnæus was thirty years of age, was the basis of the estimate of his early boyhood precocity. The point which we are stressing is not the justice of the rating but rather the age at which the evidence for superior ability was first discovered.

Harriet Martineau, with an intelligence quotient of 140, at five years of age was thought by her teacher-nurse to be "dull, unobservant, slow, and awkward."[5] In her autobiography, Miss Martineau says that her parents considered her mind "dull and unwieldy." She speaks also of the remarkable precocity of two of her cousins who visited her when she was sixteen years of age. "Ability like this was a novel spectacle to me." The cousins are not included in the Stanford *Studies,* but the girl, who at that time had a "slow," "unwieldy" mind, shines brilliantly by reflection from an intelligence which developed late, if we take Terman's eleven years of age limit as the basis.[6]

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[4] Lewis M. Terman, *Genetic Studies of Genius,* Vol. II. (Stanford University Press), p. 108.

Charles Darwin says, in his autobiography, "During my whole life I have been singularly incapable of mastering any language." His father considered him "a very ordinary boy, rather below the common standard in intellect." After finding no special indications of marked ability, the *Studies* say, under evidences of precocity, "no further record." Darwin, evidently, also developed slowly and one cannot help again wondering whether it was not his later achievements that led the compilers of the *Studies* to rate him with an I.Q. of 135-140.

John Dalton, the celebrated English chemist, who worked out the atomic theory, and Patrick Henry are not included among the geniuses of the *Studies.* Why? Was it because no evidence of precocity during their boyhood could be found? Dalton, according to his biographies, was not quick intellectually and did not show in any way unusual ability.

Patrick Henry was hopeless during his boyhood. He could not be induced to study or even to read. He did not go away by himself to practice oratory. "His companions recollect no instance of premature wit, or striking sentiment, no flash of fancy, no remarkable beauty or strength of expression." The only things in which he excelled were hunting and fishing. "Every omen foretold a life, at best, of mediocrity." The question, what his intelligence quotient would have been, cannot be downed. The *Studies* do not tell us. The estimate of the compilers would be interesting in the case of a boy whose "aversion to study was invincible" and whose time was divided between the "uproar of the chase and the languor of inaction." Why was he omitted from the list of geniuses? He had trouble in finding himself, so he was no genius.

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[5] *Ibid.,* p. 728.

[6] Lewis M. Terman, *The Intelligence of School Children* (Houghton Mifflin), pp. 268-269.

The "evidences of precocity" of Wordsworth, in the *Studies,* are that his "mother foresaw that her William would be remarkable, either for good or evil." Enough said.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan was "not only slovenly in construing, but unusually defective in his Greek grammar." His Harrow master says that "he was inferior to many of his school-fellows in the ordinary business of the school. . . . He made some progress in French, and laid the loose foundation of the desultory scholarship which, despite assertions to the contrary, he maintained to the end."

Some of Sheridan's teachers thought him a "clever fellow" and tried, as the *Studies* tell us, "though with only partial success, to spur him to raise his scholarship to a degree worthy of his 'vestiges of a superior intellect.'" This is what every teacher tries to do, but the outcome of most of the attempts have not been sufficiently encouraging to be included in the *Studies*. Sheridan, in later life, disappointed his early testers and he, therefore, appears with an I.Q. of 130-145. What was there in his boyhood that justified this judgment? The "evidences of precocity" in the *Studies* give us the clue. "Richard's father considered the elder son, Charles, to be the brighter of the two boys."

John Hunter, with an I.Q. of 110 to 130, "learned to read late and with difficulty," the *Studies* tell us. As a matter of fact, one biographer says that he was unable to read or write at seventeen years of age. As "evidences of precocity," the *Studies* say: "Great as was his aversion to formal studies, Hunter was considered by no means a stupid boy: and, although he retained the habit of childish crying long past the age when such a thing is generally tolerated, when occasion required he was bold and intrepid; indeed, at twelve years he displayed his courage by attacking a practical joker disguised as the devil when his grown companions were petrified with fear." This "evidence of precocity" should be followed by several exclamation marks.

Alexander von Humboldt, with an I.Q. of 140-170, which his subsequent work richly deserves, said of himself that in the first years of his childhood his tutors were doubtful whether even ordinary powers of intelligence would ever be developed in him, and it was only in later boyhood that he began to show any evidence of mental vigor. "Until sixteen years of age," he says, "I showed little inclination for scientific pursuits."

Yet Terman, as we have seen, believes that the life vocation of a boy can and should be settled at eleven years of age at the latest. At the time when, in Terman's opinion, the intelligence of a child can be determined accurately enough "for all practical purposes," the tutors of Alexander von Humboldt did not think that he had even ordinary intelligence.

One looks vainly in the *Studies* for any evidence of boyhood precocity that would warrant the intelligence quotient which the compilers give to this remarkable man. Like the others to which we have referred, it is clearly an *ex post facto* judgment. "By their works ye shall know them." But the works come later.

A conspicuous statement in the *Studies*, as evidence of the precocity of Heine, is that "at sixteen he fell in love with the niece of a 'witch' whom he adored, as he says, 'in scorn of society and all its dark prejudices.'" If this is evidence of precocity the press daily offers analogous examples, but rather curiously these more modern young men are not geniuses.

Hegel is given the modest I.Q. of 150. His philosophical productions prove that he deserved a higher rating. But what about the "evidences of precocity"? "Hegel's development and school progress gave evidence of a deep, critical, thoughtful mind," the *Studies* inform us. Excellent. Now let us turn to the statement of Muirhead in the *Encyclopædia Britannica.*

"At the grammar school of Stuttgart, where Hegel was educated between the ages of seven and eighteen, he was not remarkable." After taking the Ph.D. he received a theological certificate which stated that he was "of good abilities, but of middling industry and knowledge, and especially deficient in philosophy." Not much "evidence of precocity" in these biographical facts.

Newton himself has stated that he "stood very low in school," but later, "after a hard struggle," rose to the head of his class. We will let teachers, who have had boys do this without their becoming geniuses, judge the value of this evidence of childhood precocity.

The "evidences of precocity" of Schiller, as the *Studies* naïvely inform us, are "tales" told of bright sayings "before he was four years of age." "Tales" are a rather fragile foundation upon which to put "evidences of precocity." We learn further from the *Studies* that "in Latin and Greek," Schiller did "fairly," and "for mathematics he had little talent. . . . At the age of fifteen [four years after Terman's time limit for the rise of intelligence] Schiller was at the foot of his class, and there he remained for a year. . . . In his law studies he got the name of a dullard." After fame come "tales." They explain what no one saw.

Oliver Goldsmith, with an intelligence quotient of 115, was called by his teacher in early childhood one of the dullest boys whom she had ever tried to teach. Later, in the university, his tutor called him "ignorant and stupid." At twenty or twenty-one, according to the *Studies*, he "tried several employments in turn without success."

The "evidences of precocity" for Joseph Priestly, the discoverer of oxygen, are that, at six years of age, he could "repeat the Assembly's Catechism *without missing a word*" and that he knelt down to pray "in the course of the day." The latter act certainly showed piety, and the former an excellent verbatim memory, but are they convincing evidences of precocity?

Pasteur is not included among the geniuses in the *Studies*. Why? Is it because in the College Communal at Arbois "he belonged merely to the category of good average pupils," and because he preferred fishing and sketching to books and study?[7] Again we wonder.

Thackeray, whose boyhood is thought to be worth an intelligence quotient of 135, "never rose high in school . . . never was a highly classical scholar," and he disliked Euclid and algebra. These facts we learn from the *Studies*, and we are also told that, at sixteen, "he read only two novels during the term." But "about this time he read a 'curious book on the Inquisition,' which he describes as 'delectable.'" Perhaps this is the warrant for his intelligence quotient. At least we can find little else during Thackeray's early years upon which to hang the rating. But how many boys of sixteen would not have been enchanted with the wickedness of the Inquisition?

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[7] Percy Frankland, *Pasteur* (Macmillan), p. 10.

Shelley is not reckoned among the geniuses of the *Studies*. Why not? Is it because so little could be found in his earlier years to justify an intelligence quotient that bespoke a genius? His interest in poetry was not awakened until the close of his school life at Eton, considerably later, again, than the eleventh year when Terman would irrevocably determine the vocation of a boy.

Neither Ibsen, nor Pierre Curie, one of the discoverers of radium, is given a place among the geniuses of the *Studies*. Is this because the former was just barely able to graduate from the Christiania high school and the latter was so stupid that it was necessary to transfer him to a special school with a private tutor?

The compilers of the *Studies* will insist, of course, that intelligence tests would have revealed the abilities of these remarkable men and women in whom, during childhood, parents and teachers could find only mediocrity. All intelligent children, we are assured, will pass intelligence tests successfully. The men and women included in the *Studies* have proved by their achievements that they were intelligent. Therefore they would have made high scores in the intelligence tests.

This is an interesting exhibition of human logic when we recall that the question at issue is, Will the tests *always* reveal the superiority of superior children? Will they disclose unusual ability in those children who have had no opportunity to learn about the facts and principles involved in the tests or who, again, with the opportunity, have not been interested in taking advantage of it?

The present writer has not studied the childhood of all the geniuses included in the *Studies*, but those whose early life he has gone through indicate that in some cases, at least, the will of the investigators to find what they were looking for worked overtime. Geniuses, of course, were born with exceptional ability. This is self-evident. Consequently, it must have been revealed during childhood. So the hunt was on.

If, however, our sampling is a fairly correct "exhibit" of the content of the *Studies*, it raises several interesting questions and gives material for thought. Perhaps the first question of which one would think, after scanning the childhood of those whom we have mentioned, is, Does superior ability necessarily reveal itself during the earlier years, and especially at or before Terman's "dead line," namely, eleven? Our samples answer this question with a definite, No.

To be sure, if intelligence tests search out and record mental powers which reveal themselves in no other way, then neither this question nor its answer has any significance. This brings us back to the question asked at the beginning of this chapter, and in our discussion of measuring intelligence. What do the tests measure? Is it original mental endowment which is unaffected by the quality of education or by the environment in its widest sense?

If the quality of instruction has no effect upon intelligence it is useless to trouble ourselves about improving the schools. We might as well squarely face the issue.

Let us be sure that we get the point. No one, and certainly not the writer, believes that you can "make a silk purse out of a sow's ear." The question is, can the right sort of education improve a boy of average original endowment to such an extent that he will be distinctly above the average? Or, again, is the mind in a class by itself in being uninfluenced by exercise?

Once more, if intelligence has nothing to do with achievement, we may find some of superior ability who fail in everything that they undertake. This is rather an anomalous position to hold, isn't it?

On the other hand, if intelligence must finally be judged by what it does, by what its possessor accomplishes, then it includes many factors which no set of tests yet invented measures. Again we raise the questions, are we sure that we have a superior child when we have caught him with our tests, and, admitting that we have found one, is it not possible that we have missed some who, with a more stimulating environment, might have turned out to be superior?

We have said elsewhere that some boys and girls mature more slowly than others. This statement rests on unquestionable evidence. Others, again, do not easily or quickly find themselves. They taste the fruit of knowledge, here and there, but they are very particular about both the kind of information given and the way in which it is imparted. These youngsters blossom out at times when transplanted to a wholly different educational soil.

When shall we "close the books" and decide that only those "of record" at that date shall profit from the dividends that education pays? We doubt the wisdom of ever doing so. The books were almost closed on General Grant. Apparently he had been given time enough, and all that he had demonstrated was inefficiency.

But what about the question which we asked at the beginning of this chapter? Suppose that we have every indication of exceptional ability. What then should be the program? First let us settle what not to do. Such a youngster should not be displayed as "superior." This exhibition has ruined many a promising boy and girl. "There is nothing more terrible for any child than to be put up as an example of precocity," says Winifred Stoner Jr., in a signed article referring to the unfortunate experiences of her childhood.

Why did some of the widely advertised precocious children of several years ago disappoint expectations? Did the home and school spoil them? One cannot help wondering. A delicate, sensitive nervous structure is one of the hazards of exceptional ability. Superior children require superior intelligence in their trainers.

The schools try to adjust themselves to unusually bright pupils by allowing them to skip grades or by special sections which advance rapidly. These methods are good when health, social adjustment, with its many possible pathological complications, and what Stanley Hall called lopsided development, are not overlooked. But when we glance back over the childhood days of the geniuses, these plans, in a number of instances, would have been far from adequate.

Some of the geniuses did their own skipping of grades. Indeed, they were not in the classes frequently enough to know what was going on. Patrick Henry and Pasteur are illustrations.

The cousins of Harriet Martineau, again, would certainly have been put into the advanced division—their quick comprehension and remarkable memory would have justified it—while the "slow, awkward" Harriet would have remained behind. Richard Sheridan, John Hunter, Alexander von Humboldt, Newton, in his earlier years, Goldsmith, and probably George Eliot would have been kept back, while

Ibsen and Pierre Curie would quite likely have been transferred to the special school for backward children, had one existed in those days.

It looks as though we were, once more, forced back to the position which the writer has so frequently emphasized, namely, the study of the personality of the individual child. Why does one play truant, another resist all efforts to educate him, and a third, though apparently trying, make little or no progress? Is the trouble physical, mental, or emotional?

Children should advance as rapidly as they can with due regard to health and the other factors that enter into the development of a healthy personality. Nothing is more certain to create hatred for school work than to be obliged to keep lockstep with those who, at the time at least, are not equally alert. But we must remember that some children develop slowly, others, who are bright, may have their personality so mutilated by well-intentioned but uninformed methods in the home or school that they will not realize on their superiority.

Finally, the aim of parents and teachers should be to create a stimulating environment. If one plan does not produce results, another should be tried. The school and home alike should be experimental laboratories where the abilities and interests of children will be discovered. Temptations for intellectual adventures should be the order of the day. This method will not give a child more brain and mind than that with which he came into the world, but it will help him to "cash in" on what he has; and this means much.

We are not sure that early precocity will be permanent, and some of the plans advocated by writers on the training of superior children will certainly arrest it if the fates do not take a hand and save the child from the mistaken devotion of his friends. Absence of early precocity, again, should not convince us of lack of even superior ability. Wellington, "the dunce of the family," was "slow-witted," and "a failure at Eton." George Eliot is another example of brilliancy casting only a dim light during early childhood. "Hers was a large, slow-growing nature," said her husband; "and I think it is, at any rate, certain that there was nothing of the infant phenomenon about her."

Parents and teachers should plan to help children to make the most out of the ability which they have, whether it appears to be much or little. In this way, perhaps, we shall make some superior ones out of what seems rather unpromising material. Let us get down to work.

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